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TORCH-BEARERS OF HISTORY

TORCH-BEARERS

OF

HISTORY

A Connected Series of Historical Sketches

*VOL. I.—FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES
TO THE REFORMATION*

BY

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HOMER

T. NELSON AND SONS

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P R E F A C E.

THE object of the following series of historical sketches is to give young readers some idea of the way in which the torch of history has been handed on in Europe from age to age and from nation to nation, beginning in ancient Greece, and coming down to modern Germany, where, with Luther, modern history may be said to begin. With this object, the writer has selected out of each of the great epochs some representative man or woman whose life was capable of forming an interesting story, taking care to *connect* the different sketches as far as was possible without introducing too much detail.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to say that the series does not profess to include *all* the "torch-bearers" of the long period which it covers; but it was thought better to omit some, who would necessarily have been included in a *complete* series, rather than to run the risk of confusing or wearying the young readers for whom the book is intended.

In the present edition, historical maps have been added at the end.

A. H. S.

EDINBURGH, December 1893.

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CONTENTS.

PART I.

FROM PREHISTORIC TIMES TO THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE WEST.

I. HOMER—THE MYTHICAL PERIOD,	9
II. SOPHOCLES—THE PERSIAN WARS—THE GOLDEN AGE OF GREECE, ...	16
III. SOCRATES—THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR,	24
IV. ALEXANDER THE GREAT—THE RISE OF MACEDON,	31
V. REGULUS—THE RISE OF ROME—THE PUNIC WARS,	38
VI. JULIUS CÆSAR,	45
VII. VIRGIL—THE FOUNDATION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE,	52
VIII. HYPATIA—THE DECAY OF GREEK CIVILIZATION,	58

PART II.

FROM THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE WEST TO THE REFORMATION.

I. KING ARTHUR—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SAXONS IN BRITAIN, ...	66
II. CHARLEMAGNE—THE SECOND EMPIRE OF THE WEST,	74
III. ROLLO—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE NORMANS IN FRANCE,	82
IV. THE CID—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MOORS IN SPAIN,	88
V. RICHARD CŒUR DE LION—THE CRUSADES,	95
VI. DANTE—THE GUELPHS AND THE Ghibelines—THE RISE OF MODERN POETRY,	103

VII. ROBERT BRUCE—THE INDEPENDENCE OF SCOTLAND,	...	110
VIII. JOAN OF ARC—THE END OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR,	...	121
IX. COLUMBUS—THE DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD,	...	130
X. COPERNICUS—THE RENAISSANCE—THE RISE OF MODERN AS-		
TRONOMY, ... ..	...	142
XI. LUTHER—THE REFORMATION, ... ..	...	149
<hr/>		
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS ALLUDED TO,	...	160
MAPS :—		
I. Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, ... ..	...	163
II. The Empire of Alexander the Great, ... ..	...	164
III. The Roman Empire, ... ..	...	165
IV. Palestine, ... ..	...	165
V. Europe—Fourth and Fifth Centuries, ... ..	...	166
VI. The Empire of Charlemagne, ... ..	...	167
VII. Central Scotland, ... ..	...	167
VIII. France—Tenth Century, ... ..	...	168
IX. Spain—Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, ... ..	...	169
X. The West Indies—Columbus, ... ..	...	170
XI. The Land of Luther, ... ..	...	170
INDEX, ... ..	...	171

TORCH-BEARERS OF HISTORY.

PART I.

*FROM PREHISTORIC TIMES TO THE FALL OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE WEST.*

CHAPTER I.

HOMER—THE MYTHICAL PERIOD.

IF you look at your map of Europe, you will see that in the south it ends in three peninsulas. The most easterly of the three, or rather the southern part of it, is the country called Greece, and here it is that the history of Europe begins.

The people of ancient Greece were perhaps the most wonderful people that ever lived. They lived in a beautiful country, where the sun was brighter, the sky bluer, and the air clearer than we The ancient Greeks. ever see them here. They loved beauty and all things beautiful; and they sought to put the beauty that they saw around them—the beauty of the mountain-peaks that pointed to the sky, the beauty of the gently curved hill-slopes, of the spring that leapt sparkling from the earth, of the blue sea that stretched away, away, dotted with islets, and broke in a long white

streak of foam, like a happy laugh, on the rocky shore—they sought to put all that into everything they did, into the temples they built, the statues they carved, the poems they wrote, and the songs they sang. And they succeeded so far as it was possible to succeed. There are no nobler buildings in the world to-day than those which the old Greeks built two thousand three hundred years ago; no finer statues than those of Greece have ever been carved, and no grander poems than theirs have ever been written.

Greek history begins with what is called the “Mythical Period,” which just means that part of the history of Greece which is so far back in the past, and has got so much mixed up with tales of the wonderful deeds of the heroes who lived, or were supposed to live, at the time, that it is not easy to tell how much of it is true, and how much of it was invented by poets who lived long afterwards. The best known and the most inter-

esting of all the stories of the Mythical Period is the story of the Trojan war, which is supposed to have taken place in the twelfth century B.C., and which is the subject of the *Iliad*, the great poem of the first and greatest poet of Greece—Homer.

Now, though Homer’s poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, are still in existence to-day, nearly three thou-

sand years after they were composed, and are being read by hundreds of scholars in different countries of the world, we know nothing about the poet himself, except that he seems to have lived in the tenth century B.C. We do not even know where he was born—whether in Greece itself, or in one of the Greek islands, or on the coast of Asia Minor, where the Greeks had colonies. Seven towns laid claim to being the birth-place of the great poet, but none of them proved

its claim. And now some scholars want to make out that no single poet ever wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—that these poems are the work of several different poets, and that Homer never lived at all. But we will not believe that. We will believe that Homer lived, probably in Asia Minor—it does not matter exactly where—a simple, childlike man, as all great men are, with a simple, childlike worship for noble deeds and feats of arms, and a great love of Greece and everything Greek in his heart, who was far from thinking that the tales he told of the Greeks at Troy would be read by people in lands as yet unknown, long after the language in which they were written had ceased to be spoken.

Homer's poem the *Iliad* contains, as I have told you, the story of the Trojan war, and is named from Troy, or Ilium, a town in Asia Minor. More than eleven hundred years before Christ was born there The "*Iliad*." lived in Troy a king called Priam; and he had many sons and many daughters, and the best known of his sons were Paris and Hector, the brave hero of Troy. Now it was Paris who caused the great Trojan war, which lasted for ten years; for when he was staying in Sparta, a town in Greece, he carried away Helen, the most beautiful woman in Greece—carried her away over the sea to his home in Troy to be his wife. Then messengers came from Sparta demanding Helen from King Priam; but Paris did not wish to let her go, so he persuaded his father to refuse to give her up. Great was the anger of the Spartans when the messengers returned without the beautiful Helen. The king of Sparta, Menelaus, sent messages to all the kings and chiefs round about begging them to help him. Greece at that time was not governed by one sovereign, as Great Britain is, but many kings and chiefs and princes ruled over different parts

of it. Now, when the messages from King Menelaus reached these rulers, they gathered together their men, and got ready their ships, and set sail all together to bring back the beautiful Helen from Troy.

When the Greek fleet reached the Trojan shore, the men drew up their swift, curved ships upon the beach, and set up their tents and spread themselves out over the plain before the city. And many were the battles and single fights between the Greeks and the people of Troy. And at times the Trojans won, and at times the Greeks; but always the greatest glory fell to the lot of Achilles, the son of Peleus, the bravest hero of the Greeks. At length it happened that Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek host—Agamemnon, “king of men,” as Homer calls him—cast eyes of longing on a prize which brave Achilles had won in fight, and he sent men to lead away the prize from the tent of Achilles. Then Achilles was filled with anger against King Agamemnon, and he swore that he should not again lift his sword to do battle for the Greeks, and that his countrymen should feel the loss of his strong arm in the fight, for the insult which they had offered to him. So he refused any more to join battle against the men of Troy; and he sat alone by the swift ships, gazing out upon the wide sea, sorrowful and sad at heart.

Now while swift-footed Achilles sat apart, withdrawn from the fight, the battle raged between Trojans and Greeks; and Hector, the brave son of King Priam of Troy, challenged many of the bravest of the Greeks to single fight, and those who fought with him he slew, one after the other, for there was no man in all the army of the Greeks who was fit to stand up against him, save only god-like Achilles. So day by day the Greeks became weakened in strength and in spirit; and at length

the pride of Agamemnon was humbled, and he sent messengers to swift-footed Achilles, begging him to come and fight once more with his countrymen, and offering to restore to him the prize which had been taken from him, and to add to it many rich presents of gold and of silver.

But Achilles still refused to fight; for he said, "I will not join in battle or in counsel with Agamemnon, for he hath once already deceived and injured me, and he shall not again cheat me with his fair words." So the messengers sadly bore back the message of swift-footed Achilles to Agamemnon, king of men.

Now Achilles had a dear friend in the Grecian host named Patroclus. And Patroclus was grieved in heart when he saw how the Greeks were stricken by the Trojans because Achilles had withdrawn himself from the fight, and how the bravest of the Greek heroes were slain by the hand of man-slaying Hector, the son of King Priam. And Patroclus reproached Achilles for so long cherishing his anger against King Agamemnon, and prayed that, if he himself would not fight, he would at least suffer him to array himself in his armour, and to lead forth his men to battle against the Trojans. So Achilles suffered him, and Patroclus clad himself in the glittering armour of Achilles, and led forth his men to battle. And many brave deeds he did in the fight, till at length he fell by the hand of the hero Hector, who stripped him of the armour of Achilles which Achilles had suffered him to wear.

Now, while Achilles sat alone by the ships, gazing sadly out upon the sea, a messenger came to him to tell him that brave Patroclus had fallen, and that his splendid armour had become the prize of Hector, the son of Priam. Then Achilles was overcome with grief, and he threw himself on the ground and wept, and sprinkled himself

with ashes, and tore his hair and his garments. But "silver-footed" Thetis, the goddess of the sea, who was the mother of Achilles, was grieved when she beheld the sorrow of her dear son; and she rose from the depths of the sea and stood beside him, and spoke to him in soothing words, bidding him tell her what grieved him. So in sad words Achilles bewailed his lot to his mother, telling her how his dear comrade Patroclus had fallen in battle; how he was unable to avenge his death because his splendid armour had become the prize of man-slaying Hector; and how, while the fight was raging, and the Greeks were stricken by the Trojans, he, Achilles, the champion of the Greeks, was sitting idle by the ships, "a useless burden on the earth." Then Thetis spoke gentle words to him, comforting him, and promising to return at dawn the following day, bringing him a suit of armour more splendid than that which he had lost.

And straightway the silver-footed goddess sped to Olympus, the mountain on which the old Greeks believed that the gods and goddesses had their homes. (For they were not Christians, these ancient people of Greece, and they knew not the true God.) And she besought Vulcan, the god of fire, whom she found busy in his great forge, that he would make a suit of armour for her brave son Achilles, the hero of the Greek host. And Vulcan granted her prayer; and he wrought a splendid helmet fitted to the brows of Achilles, and a breastplate to cover his chest, and greaves for his limbs, and a wonderful shield, the like of which was never seen before or since.

So when the eastern sky was red with the rising morn, silver-footed Thetis stood once more beside her dear son, bearing the glittering armour which the god Vulcan had wrought for him. And Achilles clad him-

self in the armour, and went forth to do battle for the Greeks, and to avenge the death of his dear friend Patroclus; and wherever he appeared the tide of battle turned in favour of the Greeks, and single-handed he slew many of the bravest Trojans, and at length he came against Hector, the champion of Troy. But when Hector beheld him approaching, clad in his wonderful armour, which blazed like fire, fear seized upon him and he took to flight. Three times he fled round the walls of Troy, and three times swift-footed Achilles pursued him, till at length Hector strengthened himself and resolved to fight against his foe. Then he stood up against Achilles, and the two heroes did battle together, and Hector was slain; and Achilles tied his dead body to his chariot, and dragged it through the dust to the camp of the Greeks.

The rest of the *Iliad* tells how the Trojans lamented for the loss of their brave champion; and how the aged King Priam, the father of Hector, made his way in the darkness of night through the camp of the Greeks to the tent of Achilles, and besought him to deliver up the body of Hector, that the Trojans might give it honourable burial. We are glad to think that the noble Achilles was touched by the sorrow of the old king, and gave up to him the body of his son; and Priam bore the body back to Troy, and the Trojans mourned over it, and buried it in pomp and state.



COIN OF ILIUM OR TROY.

CHAPTER II.

SOPHOCLES—THE PERSIAN WARS—THE GOLDEN AGE OF GREECE.

DURING the time of Homer, as we have seen, Greece was not one kingdom, as Great Britain is, but was divided into a great many little kingdoms and states, which often made war against each other. Now, if it had always been so—if these little states had always been at war with each other, and had never united together—the Greeks would never have become the great people they did. But just about five hundred years after the time of Homer (in the fifth century B.C.) something happened which brought all the Greeks together—which taught them to love Greece, the common country of them all, and to be willing to sacrifice for her sake their petty quarrels among themselves; and this it was that made the Greeks become the greatest people in the world.

What happened was the Persian wars. Now the Persian wars are perhaps the most important wars in the history of Europe. Persia, as you know, is a country in the west of Asia. It is not a very great country now, but in the fifth century B.C. it was a very powerful and wealthy kingdom, compared with which Greece seemed a very small, unimportant place. But the Persians were not a noble, artistic people like

the Greeks. They never could have written such beautiful poems and carved such splendid statues as the Greeks: they were little more than powerful, haughty savages. Now it happened that the people of Athens, the chief city of Greece, had given offence to Darius, the king of Persia, and he determined to punish them. So in the year 490 B.C. he sent an enormous army into Greece, thinking it would be easy to conquer such a weak little country as it seemed to him.

First inva-
sion of
Greece by
the Persians.

Well, this mighty army passed over into Europe, and made its way to Greece. There it took up its position in a great plain called Marathon, not far from Athens. Now the number of the fighting-men in Athens was very small compared with the great host of the Persians; but the Athenians were not dismayed by that. They sent messengers to the other states of Greece begging for help against the foreign foe. Then they gathered together all the men who were able to carry arms, and boldly marched out of the city. At first there was some discussion among the generals; for some of them thought they should attack the enemy at once, and others that they should wait till the people of Sparta should send an army to help them. But at length Miltiades, the bravest, ablest general of them all, urged so strongly that they should fight at once that the others yielded to him. So with all the skill he had, he made his arrangements for the battle. Then he gave the signal of attack, and the little handful of Greeks rushed boldly against the great host of the enemy, who almost laughed as they saw them coming. But so bravely did the Greeks fight, and so skilfully had Miltiades made his preparations, that soon the Persian columns wavered and gave way;

Battle of
Marathon,
490 B.C.

and almost before any one knew what had happened, the mighty army of Persia was broken up, and the men were flying helter-skelter to their ships, followed by the brave little band of Greeks.

Such was the great battle of Marathon—the most important battle, perhaps, that ever was fought. Had it ended differently—had the Persians conquered the Greeks—the state of Europe would have been very different even now from what it is ; for we all—all the civilized peoples of modern Europe—have learned much from the people of ancient Greece, which we never could have learned had Greece been conquered and ruled over by a barbarous nation like Persia. Had the Greeks not been a free people, they never would have written the beautiful poems, and carved the splendid statues, and built the magnificent temples and monuments, which are still, though in fragments or in ruins, the wonder of the world.

Of course the Persian king was furious when he heard of the defeat of his army, and he determined to invade Greece a second time with a greater force than before ; but he died before he had made all his preparations. However, the next king, Xerxes, assembled an

**Second
invasion
of Greece,
480 B.C.** enormous fleet and army, which he himself led to Greece ten years after the battle of Marathon (in 480 B.C.). This time little

Greece stood out against the vast power of Persia no less nobly than she had done ten years before. It was now that the battles of Thermopylæ and Salamis were fought—battles no less glorious to Greece than Marathon itself. At Thermopylæ, it

**Battle of
Thermopylæ.** was the people of Sparta (the city of Helen of Troy) who specially distinguished themselves. Three hundred Spartans, led by their king,

Leonidas, and accompanied by some other Greeks, had been sent to guard the pass of Thermopylæ against the advancing host of the Persians. Leonidas posted his small army at the entrance to the narrow pass, on one side of which was the sea, while on the other it was bounded by high mountains; and then calmly awaited the attack of the Persians. When Xerxes saw what a small band of men was opposed to his huge army, he expected that they would retreat as soon as he attacked them; but again and again the brave handful of Greeks drove back the mighty host of the enemy, until the Persians almost despaired of forcing their way through the pass at all. But at last a base, treacherous Greek, named Ephialtes, went secretly to the army of Xerxes, and told him of a path across the mountains by which he could enter Greece, offering to guide him and his army over it. When Leonidas heard that the Persians had discovered the path over the mountains, he knew that he and his men were lost; but he never thought of retreating. He declared that he and his Spartans would remain at their post to the last—would die at it, if need were; but he gave permission to the other Greeks to retire while there was yet time. Most of them took advantage of the permission; but the Spartans and a few other Greeks remained fighting bravely in the pass. Then, when the Persians had crossed the mountains, they fell upon the Greeks in the rear, so that the brave little band was surrounded by the enemy. Even yet they would not yield: nobly the Three Hundred, or what was left of them, stood up against the thousands who assailed them, until man by man they had fallen fighting for their country. So the Persian host rolled on into Greece over the dead bodies of the brave Spartans, only to be utterly defeated in the

great sea-fight of Salamis by the Athenian general Themistocles.

The Persian wars had brought out all the strength and skill and courage of the Greeks; and after their glorious victories over Persia, they became a very great and powerful people. The fifty years that follow the wars are what is called the Golden Age of Greece. During that time many of the noblest of the Greek buildings were built, and many fine poems were written to celebrate the victories of Marathon and Salamis; and there lived in Athens, almost at the same time, some of the very greatest sculptors and philosophers and dramatists that have ever been born.

It is about one of these dramatists that I am going to tell you now—Sophocles. He was born just five

Birth of years before the battle of Marathon, in a
Sophocles, village about a mile from Athens. Though
495 B.C. he was only a little boy of five years old when the great battle was fought, he must have heard his father or some of the slaves in the house talking of it; and very likely he and his brothers and sisters (if he had any) played at Greeks and Persians, just as boys and girls at school now-a-days play at French and English. By the time of the battle of Salamis he was a lad of fifteen, and a very beautiful, clever, graceful lad he was. We hear that he won prizes for music and gymnastics; and that, when in honour of the great victory of Salamis there were games and processions at Athens, Sophocles was chosen to lead the choir, because of his beauty and grace and his skill in music. Afterwards, when he grew up, he became a great dramatist—some people say the greatest of all the Greek dramatists. I do not know about that; but at any rate we know of only two others who can be

named along with him. He died when he was a very old man—ninety years of age—after writing one hundred and thirteen plays!

Death of
Sophocles,
405 B.C.

Unfortunately most of the dramas of Sophocles have been lost. Only seven are left, one of the finest of which is *Antigonë*. This drama is named from its heroine, a noble girl, the daughter of *Œdipus*, king of Thebes, a city of Greece.

The story of
Antigonë.

When *Œdipus* was old and blind, he was driven out of Thebes, the city over which he had ruled, because of a sin which he had committed. And *Antigone* went with her father into exile, and guided his footsteps, and tended him with loving care, until he died. After that she returned to Thebes, where a new king was reigning, named *Kreon*.

Now *Antigone* had two brothers who were at war with each other, and *Kreon* the king was angry against *Polynices*, the elder brother, but the younger he favoured. And *Antigone* sought to make peace between her brothers, for she was a loving sister; but her efforts were in vain. The two brothers led out their armies against each other in open fight, and when the battle was over, they were found lying side by side, dead, upon the battle-field.

Then *Kreon* buried the younger brother with all due pomp and ceremony; but he ordered that the elder, *Polynices*, should be left unburied on the spot where he had fallen, and he proclaimed throughout the city that if any one should attempt to bury the body, he should be stoned to death by the people. Now, according to the religion of the Greeks, it was regarded as a sin to leave the dead unburied; and it was believed that if any one remained unburied after death, the gods were angry against that person and against his family. So *Antigone*

was greatly grieved when she heard what the king had proclaimed; but she decided that it was better to disobey his command than to be guilty of sin against the gods, and she resolved to bury her brother, even although she knew what a dreadful death awaited her if she were found doing so. Having thus made up her mind, she spoke to her sister Ismene of the proclamation of the king, and begged her to help to bury the dead body of their dear brother, reminding her that more terrible was the wrath of the gods than the anger of kings. But Ismene was weak, and feared the king more than she revered the gods; so she refused to help. Then Antigone went forth bravely alone to the spot where the body lay.

But Kreon had set guards round the spot, and while Antigone was sprinkling dust on the body, they caught her and brought her before the king. Full of strength and courage in the thought that she had only done what she ought, Antigone stood firmly before him, her noble form drawn up to its full height; and when he asked her sternly, "Did you do this thing?" she looked at him calmly with her beautiful brave eyes, and answered, "I did." Then Kreon asked her if she had known that he had forbidden the burial of her brother, and that death was the punishment for any one who disobeyed. Again she looked the king steadily in the face, and answered, with her noble head erect, that she had known of his command, but that she preferred to disobey the law of a mere man rather than to transgress the sacred laws of the immortal gods.

Kreon was furious at her reply, and bade the guards take her away and bury her alive in a lonely cave among the hills. So they led away the beautiful, brave girl—brave still, although such a terrible death was so

near her, and although she grieved to leave so soon the sweet air of heaven and the beautiful earth, and those who were dear to her in the world. But she knew that she had done what was right; and she was happier than Kreon, on whom the anger of the gods soon made itself felt in sad misfortunes and dire calamities.



THEMISTOCLES.

CHAPTER III.

SOCRATES—THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

JUST eleven years after the great battle of Salamis, when the beautiful boy who had led the choir of boys' voices that rose in thanksgiving for the victory was a young man of six-and-twenty, busily writing those dramas which the next year were to win for him a victory no less great; when the glorious Persian wars were still fresh in the proud hearts of the Greeks; when the stately buildings that made Athens the noblest city in the world were rapidly rising, there was born in a village near Athens a child who was afterwards to be called "the wisest of men." That child was Socrates, the great Greek philosopher.

Birth of
Socrates,
469 B.C.

Socrates was very unlike Sophocles in one respect: so far from being beautiful, like the great dramatist, he was very plain, and indeed quite ugly; but he had a wonderful way of winning the love of all who knew him, and he had great power over the young men he met. In all history there is scarcely any other man who had such power to draw men to him—any man whom, even yet, after three-and-twenty centuries, we seem to know so well and honour so much as Socrates of Athens. One person, however, we read of who did not get on well with the great philosopher, and that was his wife Xanthippe,

who was a regular shrew, and was always scolding and nagging at her husband. He used to take her scoldings very mildly and good-naturedly; and when she made the house too unpleasant with her temper, he would go out and walk about the streets, with his head sunk on his chest, deep in thought. Then some of the young men who knew him and looked up to him would gather round him, and he would go and sit with them in the market-place, or walk about in the public gardens, talking about deep and grave subjects for hours together, till the sun set and night came on. At these times he would forget all about his dinner; and sometimes he would be a whole day without any food, and at other times he would have only a piece of coarse bread and a little water. But he did not care about that; he was quite satisfied with any sort of food, so long as he had peace to think, and young men to talk to and to question. He had a way of putting a great many questions to people so as to find out what was in their minds; and sometimes, when a very conceited young man came to him, who thought he knew a great deal, the philosopher would put one question to him after another in such a way that at last the poor young man was obliged to confess he did not know anything at all. One thing Socrates believed was, that no man really knew anything, but that most men were foolish enough to think they did. Once a certain Athenian had gone to the temple at Delphi, which was sacred to the god Apollo, and had asked the oracle who was the wisest man; and the answer, given by the priestess, was that there was none wiser than Socrates. When Socrates was told this, he explained it by saying that, while other men *thought* they knew something, he was wiser than they because he *knew* that he knew nothing.

But though Socrates preferred to spend his time in thinking and studying and conversing, he did not refuse to fight when his country needed him. Three times we hear of him taking up arms; and each time he was distinguished, not only by his courage, but by his power of enduring cold, and toil, and hardship. Nevertheless, we could have wished that he had never needed to fight—not for his sake, but for the sake of Greece. For the war in which he fought was not a glorious war of liberty, like that against Persia, which brought strength and greatness to the conquerors; it was a wicked war in which Greek fought against his brother Greek, and which brought only weakness and ruin to their beautiful country.

We have seen that the reason why Greece was able to overcome the mighty strength of Persia was, that the different Greek states joined together to fight against the common enemy. If only they had stood together

Beginning
of the Peloponnesian
war,
431 B.C.

always! But it was not to be so. Less than fifty years after the close of the Persian wars (in 431 B.C.), there broke out a terrible war among the Greeks themselves, which lasted twenty-seven years—the Peloponnesian war.

The cause of this war was nothing but jealousy between the two most powerful Greek states, Athens and Sparta. The Greeks were a very wonderful people, as I have said—brave, and beautiful, and artistic; but of course they had their faults, like other nations, and one of these faults was jealousy. Whenever any general or statesman became very powerful, his countrymen seemed always jealous of him—afraid that he should make himself a tyrant; and they would find some excuse for putting him in prison, or banishing him from the state. Miltiades, the great general who won the battle of

Marathon, was an instance of this; for the people of Athens, thinking he had become too powerful, made some excuse to put him in prison, where he died.

The Peloponnesian war is named from Peloponnesus, the old name of the south part of Greece, in which Sparta was situated, and which is now called the Morea. During the Persian wars, Athens had led all the other Greek states, and had gained the greatest glory; so the people of Sparta became jealous of Athens, and made some excuse for quarrelling with the Athenians. Thus there broke out that terrible war, which lasted till 404 B.C., and caused the downfall of Greece.

I am not going to tell about any of the battles that were fought during the Peloponnesian war, for they were not glorious battles like Marathon and Thermopylæ. But of course there were many brave deeds done during the war, and two in particular are told of Socrates. We hear that the first time he bore arms as a soldier, while he was fighting bravely in battle amidst his comrades, he saw a young friend fall wounded by the enemy some little distance off, and immediately made his way to the spot, and stood by the young man, and protected him from the enemy, and so saved his life. After the battle, he was offered the prize given for courage in fight, which was a crown and a suit of armour. But he refused it, and insisted that it should be given to Alcibiades, the young friend whom he had saved, and who afterwards became one of the greatest Athenian generals. Alcibiades showed his gratitude to Socrates by saving his life in the second battle in which the great philosopher fought. It was on this occasion that Socrates, seeing another young friend, Xenophon, lying wounded in the thick of the fight, raised him on his shoulders and

Socrates
serves as a
soldier.

carried him to a place of safety, fighting his way as he went. Xenophon afterwards became a great historian, as well as a great general, and it is in his writings and those of Plato—another pupil of Socrates—that we get to know and love the philosopher.

After serving in three campaigns, Socrates settled down in Athens, where he spent his time in thinking and studying and conversing with his disciples, as I have said. There was no one better known by sight in the streets of Athens than Socrates, with his ugly face and his coarse, shabby cloak, and the band of young men who always followed him, talking and listening.

But even Socrates, simple and noble and humble as he was, had his enemies; and at last, when he was an old man of seventy, they got up charges against him, and he was brought before the judges and tried. The charges brought against him were that he did not believe in the gods of Athens, and that he spoiled the young men whom he taught by teaching them to disbelieve. I think it is likely that Socrates did not believe in all the gods of Greece—Jupiter and Apollo, and all the rest—but I am sure he believed in a Divine Power that watches over men; and that the young men never learned anything wrong from him.

Calmly and nobly the old man defended himself, standing up alone, in his coarse, threadbare cloak; but after all, the judges found him guilty, though he had lived such a simple life, caring for nothing but to do the work which he thought had been given him to do. They found him guilty, and condemned him to die! Very quietly and calmly did the brave philosopher hear his sentence. If his judges wished for his death, he said, they would not have had

**Charges
against
Socrates.**

His trial.

long to wait; he was old, and could not have many more years to live. But for his own part, he did not look upon death as an evil, since he knew that, after death, he should join the noble men who had lived and died in the past. Of this, too, he was sure, that whether in life or in death no evil could befall a good man, over whom the Divine Power had watched. "And now," he wound up, "it is time for us to go—you to life, I to death; and which of the two is best is known only to God."

He was kept some time in prison before he was put to death; and during that time his friends made plans for his escape, and did all in their power to persuade him to go. But he refused to leave his prison. Since his countrymen had seen good to put him to death, he said, he was resolved to submit. So every morning his young friends came to the prison, and waited till the doors were opened. Then they would go in and sit with Socrates, and listen to him talking for hours together. At last the day came when he was to die. His young friends had gathered together outside the prison even earlier than usual that morning, for they had heard that it was the last which their master had to spend on earth, and they did not wish to lose one moment of his presence among them and of his wise converse. When at length the jailer opened the doors and permitted them to enter, they found Socrates calmly sitting up rubbing his leg, from which the irons he had worn had just been taken off, while his wife Xanthippe sat beside him, with a child in her arms, weeping and lamenting. All day long his friends stayed with him, conversing gravely and earnestly about the gods, the soul of man, and the life beyond the grave. When the sun was sinking below the hill-tops in the west—the

last sun which Socrates was ever to see on earth—the jailer entered with the cup of poison which he was condemned to drink. Calmly Socrates took it from the man's hand and drank it off to the dregs, he alone unmoved of all who were present. One friend covered his face with the folds of his cloak, that Socrates might not see the tears he could not keep back; another fled from the room in uncontrollable grief; while a third sobbed aloud. Even the jailer was moved to tears as he bade the noble philosopher farewell. Never, he said, had any man so good, so meek, and so noble come into that place.

So died the man of whom it was said that he was the best of his time, as well as the wisest and most just.



GREEK PHILOSOPHER.

CHAPTER IV.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT—THE RISE OF MACEDON.

I HAVE said that the Peloponnesian war brought about the downfall of Greece; and we are now going to see how this came to pass.

Once on a time an old chief lay dying, and he gathered his sons round his death-bed to give them his parting advice. He pointed to a bundle of arrows tied together that lay at his side, and he bade his sons each try to bend or to break the arrows without untying the string. And they tried; but they could neither bend nor break the arrows. Then the dying chief bade them untie the bundle, and break the arrows one by one. This the young men did with ease. "Now," said their father, "so long as you stand together, you shall be like the bundle of arrows—your enemies shall not have power to bend or to break you; but so soon as you fall apart, remember that the fate of the single arrows shall be yours—you shall be broken in fragments and scattered to the winds."

At the time of the Peloponnesian war the Greeks had forgotten the truth that is contained in this old story. Year by year, as they fought amongst themselves, the strength by which they had overthrown the hosts of Persia became weakened; men were killed, money was wasted; and when

Effects of the
Pelopon-
nesian war.

the war ended, the people of Greece were no longer able to fight a foreign foe. Meantime, while Greece was becoming weaker and weaker, there was a country on the north of it which was growing stronger and stronger every day. That country was Macedon, of which Alexander the Great was king.

Even before the time of Alexander, the Greeks had been conquered by the people of Macedon under Philip, the father of Alexander. When he was a boy,
Philip of Macedon. Philip had been carried away as a prisoner of war to the city of Thebes in Greece; and there he grew up and learned much which he would never have learned if he had been brought up at home in Macedon. Afterwards, when he was king of Macedon, he made use of all he had learned in Greece against the Greeks themselves. One thing he had learned was that the best way to weaken Greece was to make the different Greek states fight against each other; so he kept on stirring up jealousies among them until they were all at war with one another, and two of them begged Philip to come and help them to fight against the people of Athens and Thebes. Of course that was just what he wanted, so he at once led a large army
Battle of Chæronea, into Greece; and at a place called Chæronea
338 B.C. he completely defeated the Athenians and the Thebans. That was in the year 338 B.C., a little more than one hundred and fifty years after the glorious battle of Marathon. Greece never recovered from that defeat; it never was again the great country it had been before. Just as we may say that Marathon made Greece, so we may say that Chæronea ruined it.

Alexander, the son of Philip, who was then only seventeen or eighteen years of age, was present at the battle; and young though he was, he made proud the heart of

his father by the courage with which he fought, and the skill with which he led the troops intrusted to him. We are told that after the battle Philip embraced his son, and said to him, "Go, my son, and seek another empire, for that which I leave to thee is not worthy of thee!" Even before the battle, Alexander had often showed that he was by nature brave and full of daring. There is a story that a certain man had a horse which he wanted to sell to Philip—a fine, high-spirited animal, pure white, with a black mark like an ox's head on its flank; but as none of his nobles could manage it when they tried, Philip ordered the man to take it away. Alexander, however, who was then a boy, begged that he might be allowed to mount the horse; and so well did he sit it, and so cleverly did he manage it, that at last it became quite tame and gentle with him. So he kept the horse, and called it Bucephalus (ox-head), because of the mark on it. Afterwards, when he grew up to be a man, and led his army into distant lands, conquering all who came against him, he always had Bucephalus with him; and when at last the good horse died, far away in India, his master built a town in his honour and called it Bucephala.

Alexander was not only a better horseman than most young men of his time; he was also a better scholar, and knew more about the learning of the Greeks. When he was a lad, he was fortunate enough to be taught by the great Greek philosopher Aristotle; and from him he learned to understand and love the works of the great Greek writers. Above all, we are told, he loved the works of the poet Homer, and greatly admired his hero, swift-footed Achilles, whom he ever sought to imitate.

It was when Alexander's father Philip died, scarcely

two years after the battle of Chæronea, that the Greeks first discovered what an able soldier Alexander was. When they heard of the death of Philip, they thought the time had come to make Greece independent of

**Revolt of
the Greeks
against
Macedon.**

Macedon; for Alexander was still so young that they did not think he would be able to lead an army against them. So they rose up and fought against the Macedonians in Greece, and declared themselves free; but in a wonderfully

**They are
defeated by
Alexander.**

short time Alexander arrived in Greece with his army, and soon showed that he was more than a match for the Greeks, who were weakened by their many wars among themselves, and who were soon glad to make peace with him.

**Alexander
sets out
for Persia,
334 B.C.**

For some time after that, Alexander was employed fighting and conquering the wild tribes on the north of Macedon; but in 334 B.C. he set out with a large army for Persia. First he crossed the Hellespont, the strait separating Europe from Asia Minor, which is now called the Dardanelles. When he reached the place where Troy had stood, he held games and feasts in honour of the Trojan war. Not long afterwards, a large army of Persians met him at the banks of the river

**Battle of the
Granicus.**

Granicus, which is not very far from Troy, and tried to prevent him from advancing any further. But he completely defeated the army, and then marched southwards, conquering all who opposed him; and he soon made himself master of the whole of Asia Minor. There is a story that, in a town of Asia Minor called Gordium, there was a chariot which had belonged to one of the old kings of the place, the yoke of which was tied to the pole by such a wonderful knot that no one could unfasten it;

and it was believed that whoever could untie that knot would rule over all Asia. When Alexander saw the knot, he did not try to untie it, but it is said he simply cut it with his sword. So now-a-days, when any one finds an easy way out of a difficulty, we say he has "cut the Gordian knot."

When the king of Persia heard of Alexander's conquests, he assembled a great army and led it himself against the Macedonians. At Issus, at the entrance to Syria, the two armies met, and the Persians were utterly routed. Then

**Battle of
Issus,
333 B.C.**

Alexander marched through Syria, and took the town of Tyre, after besieging it for several months. He next led his army into Egypt, where he founded a town which he called, from his own name, Alexandria. After remaining some time in

**Founding of
Alexandria,
332 B.C.**

Egypt, he again marched through Syria, crossed the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and defeated the Persian army for the third time in the plain of Arbela. During the next few years he laid waste several Persian towns, and conquered

**Battle of
Arbela,
331 B.C.**

the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes, one after the other. No one could stand against him; never was leader so successful. Some of the savage people actually began to think that he was not a man at all but a god; and the brilliant young general himself, elated with all his wonderful triumphs and with the homage which he everywhere received, almost believed that the priests of Ammon had spoken truly. For it is said that, when he was in Egypt, Alexander visited the temple of the Egyptian god Ammon, and the priests there declared him to be the son of the god.

After he had conquered all the people on the west of the Indus, he resolved to cross that river and enter

India. So in the year 327 B.C. he led his army to the west bank of the Indus, where they cut down a forest to make ships, and then sailed across the river. Arrived on the east side of the river, he fought and conquered many Indian chiefs and founded many towns—one, as I said above, in honour of his horse Bucephalus. Then, still unsatisfied with all the conquests he had made, he was eager to push forward to the great Indian river the Ganges; but his men, heartily sick of fighting, and of marching for miles under a scorching sun, began to grumble among themselves, and at last refused to go any further. So Alexander, sorely against his will, was obliged to turn back. On the march back, the way lay through the great desert that lies to the west of the Indus, and terrible were the hardships which the army suffered as they passed through it; more than half the men perished from thirst, or famine, or exhaustion, and many were slain by the savage tribes who, from time to time, made sudden attacks upon them. When they reached Babylon, Alexander resolved to remain for some time in that city, and to make it the capital of his great empire, which now stretched from the Danube to the Indus.

But he had not long been there when he was seized with a sudden illness, and died in a few days. That was in the year 323 B.C., when he was only about thirty-two years of age.

When we read the life of Alexander, we are apt to get tired of hearing of so many battles and conquests; but we must not forget that these conquests really did good even to the people who were conquered, for wherever Alexander went he tried to spread Greek learning and Greek civilization. There is a story told about him which I think is more pleasant to read than the

history of all his great victories. It is said that once, when he was taken ill in Asia Minor, he received an anonymous letter telling him to beware of his doctor, who was called Philip, for that he intended to poison him. Now Alexander trusted and believed in Philip, and his faith in him was not shaken in the least by this letter ; so when Philip brought him a cup of medicine, he took it from him without a moment's hesitation and drank it off. As he did so, he handed the letter to the good doctor, who, we can well believe, was much touched at this proof of his king's faith in him.



COINS OF PHILIP AND ALEXANDER.

CHAPTER V.

REGULUS—THE RISE OF ROME—THE PUNIC WARS.

AS yet I have told you nothing of any people save those who lived in the eastern peninsula of southern Europe; but now we are going to follow the course of history and pass over into the central peninsula, Italy, where I shall introduce you to a people no less great and wonderful than the Greeks—I mean the Romans.

It is generally supposed that Rome was built in 753 B.C., about two hundred and fifty years after Homer

Foundation lived; but that is really not known for certain.
of Rome, We do know, however, that even before the
753 B.C. Persian wars, in which the Greeks so nobly won

their freedom, the Romans had shown no less plainly than the Greeks, though not in such a glorious way, their hatred of tyranny and their love of liberty: it was

King
Tarquin
banished,
510 B.C.

in 510 B.C. that the Romans banished their king, Tarquinius, who had been a cruel tyrant, and resolved that they would never be ruled over by another king. Tarquinius got a powerful chief to help him, and marched against Rome with a great many men, thinking he would force the people to make him their king again; but the Romans went out against him and drove him back. There never was another king in Rome, and no single

man ruled over the people, except in time of war, for many centuries.

I have said that the Romans were not less great than the Greeks; but they were very different from them. They had not the Greek love of beauty, and the Greek power of creating beautiful things. They were not naturally poets and artists; they were soldiers and statesmen and lawyers. If they could not carve beautiful statues and rear noble temples like the Greeks, they could at least frame laws which, after all these centuries, still live and are in force to-day in countries very far distant from Rome—countries which the old Romans did not even know to exist. No doubt it was largely due to those excellent laws that Rome grew daily in strength and in greatness, until at last her rule extended over the whole known world; but I think that another important cause of this was the fact that the freedom and prosperity of the state of Rome formed the *ideal* of every worthy Roman citizen. Do you know what I mean by an ideal? It is something to be lived for and up to; something which has nothing to do with ourselves and our pleasures, our likings and dislikings; something which we would give all that we have and are to reach—our fortune and friends, our life and liberty. That is what the freedom and greatness of Rome were to every good citizen at the time I am going to tell you of—when Regulus lived. The little Roman boys, while they were still at their mothers' knees, were taught that they must always put the state before anything else—before father and mother and self—and when they grew up they did not forget these lessons. They lived simply—ate plain food and wore coarse clothes—and they kept themselves always practised in arms, so that they were ready to fight whenever their country needed them—

ready to lay down their lives and all that they had for the sake of their ideal. Thus Rome grew in strength and greatness day by day, till at last the people, who had grown up in what was at first a little mud-built town overlooking the Tiber, became the greatest, the only power in the world. Then they fell; but not till they had lost their ideal—till they had become proud and haughty, caring for nothing but ease and luxury. That, however, was not till long, very long, after the time I am going to speak of now.

Though, as I have said, Rome is supposed to have been built in the eighth century B.C., it was not till several centuries afterwards—not till the third century B.C.—that the Romans became one of the most important powers of Europe. At the time when the Greeks were deciding the fate of Europe at Marathon and at Salamis, and afterwards, when Alexander the Great was gaining his brilliant victories in Asia, the Romans were preparing for their future greatness by strengthening their city, making their laws, and conquering the other peoples of Italy. By the middle of the third century B.C., when Regulus lived, they had made themselves masters of all Italy; and it was then that those wars began which made Rome take a foremost place in the history of Europe—I mean the Punic wars, the fourth of the great wars of Europe.

On the north coast of Africa and the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, just opposite the island of Sicily, there stood, at the time of which I am going to
Carthage. tell you, and for many centuries before, the city of Carthage. In the third century B.C., the city had become very great and wealthy, and had conquered, by means of its powerful fleet, parts of the coast of Spain, and several islands in the Mediterranean—Cor-

sica, the Balearic Islands, and a large part of Sicily. It was in Sicily that the Romans first came forward as the enemy of Carthage, and that the Punic wars began. The name is derived from *Pæni*, the Latin name for the Carthaginians (who were of *Phœnician* origin), and is applied to the wars between Rome and Carthage, which lasted for several years, and ended with the complete destruction of Carthage.

The Punic
wars.

I am not going to tell you here the excuse which the Romans made use of for beginning the wars, but I think the real cause of the wars was that the Romans, after having conquered all Italy, wanted to conquer Sicily too, and to put down the Carthaginians, of whom, no doubt, they were jealous.

Whatever was the true cause, the Romans sent an army into Sicily, and laid siege to several towns held by Carthage, some of which they conquered.

After fighting in Sicily for some years, sometimes winning and sometimes losing, they resolved to attack Carthage itself. So in 256 B.C. they got together a great fleet, which they sent to Africa under the command of Regulus and another general.

Regulus
sets out for
Carthage,
256 B.C.

Now Regulus was a very able general, and won some brilliant victories over the Carthaginians; but it is not his skill as a general that has made him famous even to our own day. If he had always been victorious, I don't think I should have cared to tell you about him at all. It was not when he conquered, but when he was defeated, that he showed how very great he was. He was a true Roman citizen—perhaps the noblest citizen that Rome ever had; and, as I told you, the freedom and prosperity of Rome were the ideal of every true citizen. They were certainly the ideal of Regulus. A stern, simple, upright

man, loving his country with all his heart, he was always ready to do whatever Rome bade him without asking why, always ready to sacrifice self and life and liberty in her service. So when he was ordered to take the command of the fleet and sail over to Carthage, he obeyed without hesitation.

At first he was very successful. Just off the south coast of Sicily he met the Carthaginian fleet, which, although it was much larger than the Roman one, he completely defeated; then he sailed to Africa, where he landed, and won several important victories. But at last the Carthaginians got the help of a great Greek general, who added to the army, trained the men thoroughly, and then led them out against the Romans. The Roman army was completely scattered, and Regulus himself was taken prisoner.

He remained a prisoner for several years while the war between Carthage and Rome still went on. Can not you fancy how terrible those years of idleness and captivity in a strange land must have been to the brave and active soldier, to the loving father who had a wife and children at home in his beloved Rome; how bitter must have been the thought that he could do nothing to help his country in her struggles; how eagerly he must have listened for every scrap of news about the war, hoping day after day that his countrymen would come victorious to Carthage and set him free—free to see again his dear wife and little ones, free to fight once more for Rome, which was dearer to him even than they? At last, after five or six years, the time came when he might be free. The Romans had gained a great many victories in Sicily, and the Carthaginians resolved to send ambassadors to Rome to ask for peace, or

for an exchange of prisoners. Along with the ambassadors they sent Regulus, after making him take his oath that, if the Romans did not agree to their terms, he would come back to Carthage. He is sent to Rome with ambassadors. They thought that, when Regulus knew that his own liberty and perhaps his life depended upon it, he would be sure to persuade the Romans to accept the terms offered. But they did not know the power of the Roman ideal in the heart of a true Roman citizen.

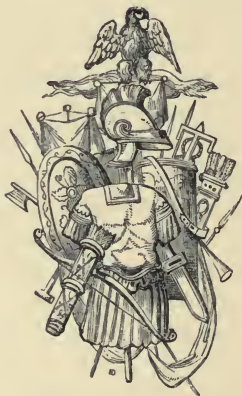
Well, on reaching Rome, the Carthaginian ambassadors and Regulus were brought before the senate—the body of men who made the laws for Rome, as our Houses of Parliament do for our country. When the ambassadors had delivered the message they had brought, the senate dismissed them, but Regulus they bade remain. Then they asked him for his advice: did he, knowing the condition of both states and both armies, think it well for Rome to accept the terms offered? Now Regulus knew that on his answer depended his life; but he did not pause for that—I am sure he did not pause one moment. In a clear, firm voice he answered, His advice to the senate. “No! refuse!” And then he explained so clearly the reasons why it was better for Rome to refuse the terms offered by Carthage that the senators saw that they must refuse. But they said that Regulus must not go back to Carthage, where no doubt he would be put to death. He should stay with his own countrymen, and the high priest should free him from his oath.

But Regulus said, “Not so. I have taken my oath, and I will fulfil it. To break an oath is sinful, and brings the anger of the gods. I will not bring the anger of the gods upon Rome—upon my country.”

And he remained firm in his resolve. His friends

argued with him, and tried to persuade him to break his vow ; but in vain. His wife clung weeping round his neck, and his little ones clasped his knees and cried aloud ; but he tore himself away from them—away from Rome, and was true to his vow.

When he reached Carthage, the people of the city, in anger that the embassy had failed, put him to death by slow torture.



ROMAN ARMOUR FROM TRAJAN'S COLUMN.

CHAPTER VI.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

SO year by year Rome grew in strength and greatness. The Punic wars were fought and won, and Carthage was reduced to a heap of ruins; though not till after the Carthaginians, under their great leader Hannibal, had laid many thousands of brave Romans dead upon the battlefield of Cannæ. Macedon was conquered by Roman arms, and Greece became a Roman province. Rome was a very great power when Cæsar was born—just one hundred years B.C.—but it was to become greater and more powerful still.

Battle of
Cannæ,
216 B.C.

Birth of
Cæsar,
100 B.C.

I wish I could say of Cæsar, as I said of Regulus, that the welfare of Rome was his ideal—was what he lived and worked and fought for. But I am afraid I cannot say so. Cæsar was a very great general and statesman—much greater than Regulus—and he was distinguished too, as you will see, as an author; but I do not think he would have gone back, like Regulus, to torture and death in Carthage when wealth and honour were lying at his feet in Rome—not even to save his country and his countrymen from the anger of the gods.

I am not going to tell you about his early battles, and how he pushed and struggled to reach the front in Rome.

It was in the year 59 B.C. that he obtained the highest honour that his fellow-citizens could offer him. He became consul. The consuls were the chief magistrates at Rome. Two were elected every year, and during the following twelve months they ruled like kings; but at the end of that time they had to give up their office, and they were then sent to govern one of the provinces of Rome—the name which the Romans gave to the countries conquered and ruled over by them. The province to which Cæsar was sent was Gaul. Gaul was the old name for the country which is now called France; but at the time that Cæsar went there the whole of Gaul was not yet a province of Rome. Take your map of France and look at the country which lies to the west of the Jura mountains, and through which the river Rhône flows. That country is called Provence, which is the same word as the Latin *provincia*, a province. It had been conquered by Rome, and had become a Roman province, before Cæsar was born.

For nearly nine years Cæsar was governor of Gaul, and during all that time he was almost constantly fighting against some Gallic tribe or other, and was always winning. Never was there a more able, a more successful, or a more popular general. The soldiers of his army quite idolized him. As he rode or walked in the van, strong, tall, handsome, with head uncovered in sunshine and rain, they were willing to follow him to the end of the world; when, on the eve of battle, he addressed one of his stirring speeches to them, they were ready to pour out their last drop of blood for him; and even the most timid in the ranks would rather face the enemy with fearful odds than meet the sharp glance of scorn in his general's eye. Everything fell

before him. One Gallic tribe after another was conquered and became subject to Rome, and still Cæsar advanced with his victorious army. In the year 55 B.C., and again in the following year, he went over to Britain, where he fought and conquered some of the savage tribes who at that time inhabited the islands in which we are living now. He has described what he saw of Britain and of the people of Britain, as well as his Gallic wars, in a book which he wrote, and which many a boy is stumbling through in many a school to-day.

Goes to
Britain,
55 B.C.

While Cæsar was fighting in Gaul, the man who had chief power in Rome was Pompey, sometimes called the Great. Now Pompey, like Cæsar, was a very ambitious man, and the two men were very jealous of each other. Pompey was married to Cæsar's daughter Julia, and as long as she lived she managed to keep them on apparently friendly terms. But when her father was in Gaul she died, and then the hatred and jealousy of the two great generals became open and evident. Although Cæsar had a great many friends at Rome, the senate was much more friendly to Pompey than to him; and so Pompey, who had been made consul alone, persuaded it to make a decree commanding Cæsar to break up his army and resign his government.

Pompey.

Decree of
the senate.

When this decree reached Cæsar he had conquered all Gaul, had even crossed the Rhine and mastered some German tribes who lived on the other side of it, and was in what was then called Gallia Cisalpina (Cisalpine Gaul)—that is, the north part of Italy, which is now called Lombardy and Venetia.

After hearing the decree, he led his army southwards till he reached the banks of a little brook called the

Rubicon, which separated Cisalpine Gaul from Italy proper. According to the laws of Rome, he dared not cross this brook, which separated his province from Italy, without permission from the senate. For a long time he hesitated: one writer tells us that he sat on horseback all night trying to make up his mind what to do; but when the morning rose his courage and resolu-

Cæsar crosses the Rubicon. tion rose too, and exclaiming, "The die is cast!" he leaped the stream, followed by his troops. Now-a-days, when any one makes up his mind to do anything after hesitating a long time, we say that he has "crossed the Rubicon."

When the news that Cæsar was advancing reached Rome, there was great alarm and commotion. Pompey and several of the senators left Rome and went to Greece, whither, after conquering all Italy, as well as Pompey's army in Spain, Cæsar followed them. In all his actions Cæsar showed the greatest mercy and generosity, and I think it was quite as much to these qualities as to his brilliant ability as a general that he owed his success and popularity. When he conquered, he always pardoned those who had fought against him; and he gave free permission to any men in his army who had been friends of Pompey to leave him and join Pompey. In

Battle of Pharsalia. Greece the armies of the two generals met at a place called Pharsalia, and there was fought one of the most celebrated battles in history.

Pompey's army was very much larger than Cæsar's, and at first it seemed as if Pompey would conquer; but in the end Cæsar completely defeated him. It was a very brilliant victory, and showed great skill on Cæsar's part; but more than all his military skill I admire the order he gave his men, when they were cutting to pieces the flying enemy, "Soldiers, spare your fellow-countrymen!"

After this battle Pompey escaped to Egypt, where the king put him to death, thinking to please Cæsar, who was now victorious everywhere. Some time afterwards, when Cæsar arrived in Egypt, and was presented with the embalmed head of his murdered rival, we are told that he shrank with horror from the sight, and burst into tears; and the king of Egypt found that he had not chosen a good way of pleasing the generous conqueror.

On his return to Rome, his fellow-citizens did not know how to make enough of him. There were feasts and processions in his honour. He was chosen consul for ten years, and was also made dicta-
Cæsar made
dictator.
tor for life—a title which was usually only given to some great general for a short time during an important war. As a statesman Cæsar showed himself as generous as he had been as a general. He proclaimed pardon to all who had fought against him, invited those who had fled to other countries for safety to come back to their homes and lands, and he even gave some of the most important offices in Rome to friends of Pompey. When he had to appoint a man to a place, he never seemed to consider whether he was a friend of his or not; he only thought whether he was the best man for the place.

Yet, in spite of all this, in spite of the many good measures he carried out, there was a large number of men in Rome who were unfavourable to him—some because they were jealous of him, and some because they thought that it was not good for Rome that one man should be so powerful as Cæsar had become; and they were afraid that they were going to have kings again in Rome. Among the first class was a Roman of noble family called Cassius, and among the second was Brutus. Now Brutus was a very noble man, who, like Regulus and the Romans

of an earlier time, held the freedom of Rome dearer than anything else in the world. Cassius, knowing this, worked upon Brutus—told him that Cæsar meant to make himself king, and that the freedom of Rome was in danger, and tried to persuade him to join a number of nobles who had formed a plot to put Cæsar to death. At first Brutus hesitated, for although he loved Rome more than everything else in the world, still Cæsar was his friend, and had shown him many acts of kindness; and his noble nature shrank from the thought of setting upon an unarmed man, a friend, with swords and daggers, and putting him to death. For long he brooded over the matter in great trouble of mind, but at last he decided that duty to his country must come before friendship and gratitude, and that any blow which should free Rome from a tyrant was right and honourable. So he agreed to join the conspirators. I do not mean to say that he was right—I shall leave that for you to decide—but at any rate he *thought* he was doing right.

Then the conspirators arranged the place where the deed was to be done, and the day. The place was to be the senate-house, and the day the fifteenth of March—or the *Ides* of March, as the Romans called it, for they did not number the days of the months as we do. Before the day arrived, Cæsar had been warned by a soothsayer to “beware the Ides of March;” but he only smiled, and thought nothing of it. On his way to the senate on the fatal day he passed the soothsayer, and said to him jestingly, “The Ides of March have come!” “Yes, but they have not passed,” was the answer.

In the senate-hall the conspirators were all ready to receive him, their daggers hidden in the folds of their long cloaks. As had been arranged, one of them came

forward and presented Cæsar with a petition; and while Cæsar was speaking, the others rushed upon him, and plunged their daggers into him. At first, though unarmed, he tried to defend himself alone against them all, but when he saw his friend Brutus strike—

“ Ingratitude, more strong than traitors’ arms,
Quite vanquished him : then burst his mighty heart.”

With the words, “Thou, too, Brutus!”—words which must have cut more deeply into Brutus’s heart than all the daggers that were plunged into Cæsar’s—he wrapped his robe about him and fell upon the ground—at the foot of Pompey’s statue, some writers say.

His death,
44 B.C.



COIN OF JULIUS CÆSAR.

CHAPTER VII.

VIRGIL—THE FOUNDATION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

WHEN Brutus saw the great Cæsar lying dead at his feet, he thought that the freedom of the Romans was safe for ever—that never again would a single man rule as king in Rome. But he was mistaken. Not many years after the fatal Ides of March, another Cæsar was ruling in Rome with all the power of the great Julius, and even more of pomp and splendour; while Brutus, driven out of Rome by the citizens, for the sake of whose freedom he had done the terrible deed, had fallen by his own hand on the battle-field of Philippi. That battle was named from the town of Philippi in Macedon, near which it was fought. Thither Brutus had fled when the people of Rome rose in furious indignation against him and the other murderers of Cæsar; and there, in 42 B.C., two years after Cæsar's death, Brutus and Cassius led out their men to meet the army of Octavianus, Cæsar's nephew and adopted son, who had come against them to avenge his uncle's murder. The two generals, Brutus and Cassius, both fell on the field—"the last of the Romans," as they have been called, because they were the last who clung to the old ideal of Roman freedom. Never again was Rome a free state, as it had been in the days of Regulus. A few years after

Battle of
Philippi,
42 B.C.

the battle of Philippi, Octavianus (afterwards called Augustus, which means "the Venerable") was ruling as emperor, the first of a long line stretching from the fall of Roman freedom to the fall of Rome.

Octavianus becomes Emperor of Rome with the name Augustus.

While the fate of Rome was being decided at Philippi, there was living quietly near Mantua, a town in the north of Italy, which you will still see marked on your map, the greatest of Roman poets—Virgil. I told you that the Romans were not naturally artists and poets like the Greeks; but still, when they conquered Greece, and got to know and understand all the wonderful things the Greeks had done—the statues they had carved, and the poems they had written—they were filled with admiration, and many of the cleverest among them took to studying the works of the Greeks, and were even stirred up to try to write something as good themselves. Now Virgil was one of the Romans who most admired the poems of the Greeks, and who studied them most carefully—especially, I think, the poems of Homer.

In the year 70 B.C., while Julius Cæsar was still struggling to reach the front in Rome, and before he had led as yet his army into Gaul, Virgil was born at a little village near Mantua, where his father seems to have had a small farm. During those stirring years that saw the rise and fall of Cæsar and the death of Roman freedom, the poet appears to have lived quietly, caring but little, as poets are apt to do, whether Cæsar or Pompey conquered, whether Rome was empire or republic, so long as he had peace and leisure to study his beloved Greek books and to try his own hand at writing poetry.

Birth of Virgil, 70 B.C.

After the battle of Philippi, Octavianus and the generals

who had sided with him against Brutus and Cassius rewarded the soldiers who had fought under them by giving them bits of land; and Virgil's farm, like those of others, was taken from him and given to an old soldier. Then Virgil went to Rome, and there, by the help of a powerful friend, he persuaded Octavianus to give him back the land. Afterwards he became a favourite with the emperor, who was proud of being considered a patron of literature. During his reign lived many of the greatest Roman writers, so that "the Augustan age" has now come to be the name given to that period in the history of any country when literature and learning

Death of Virgil, 19 B.C. were at their greatest perfection. Very little is known of the events of Virgil's life; most likely they were few. He died in the year 19 B.C., and was buried at Naples.

Virgil's best-known, though perhaps not his greatest, poem is the *Æneid*, the story of Æneas, a Trojan prince,

Story of the "Æneid." who escaped from Troy when it was taken by the Greeks. You will remember that Homer's poem, the *Iliad*, was all about the siege of Troy. Well, Virgil takes up the story where Homer left it, and describes to us "Troy's last agony"—the taking and burning of the city by the Greeks.

Ten years had come and gone since first the Greeks drew up their fleet upon the Trojan shore, and still the Greek ships lay high and dry upon the beach, and still the Greek tents were pitched upon the plain beneath the walls of Troy. Many brave men, both Greeks and Trojans, had fallen in fight, amongst them the noblest of all the Trojans—Hector, the son of King Priam, slain by the hand of swift-footed Achilles. At length a Greek called Sinon allowed himself to be taken prisoner by the Trojans, pretending that he was flying from his

countrymen, who, he said, wished to sacrifice him to the goddess Minerva, who was believed to be angry with them. Well, the Trojans believed him, and were persuaded by him to receive into the city a huge wooden horse, which was hollow, and was filled with armed Greeks, though the Trojans did not know that. Then at night, when the city was sunk in sleep, the treacherous Sinon opened a door in the wooden horse, and the men within it poured out and fell upon the sentinels and slew them; and afterwards they unfastened the city gates, and all the Greeks trooped in.

A terrible scene of bloodshed followed. In his poem Virgil makes the Trojan chief, Æneas, describe how he awoke out of sleep and found the city in a state of indescribable horror. Many houses were blazing, corpses lay scattered in the streets and on the steps of houses, while the groans of the wounded, the shouts of the fighters, and the blare of trumpets mingled together in deafening confusion. Æneas made his way to the palace; and there he tells how he found the queen and her many daughters and daughters-in-law huddled together round the altar in the inner court, "like pigeons flying before a lowering storm," while King Priam has buckled on with trembling, aged fingers his long-unused armour, and is eager to rush out into the thickest of the fight. But, alas, it is not to be! The brave old king is slain before his own altar, and under the eyes of wife and daughters. When Æneas sees him fall a great horror seizes him, as he thinks that perhaps by this time his own old father, who is about the age of the king, may be, like Priam, lying slain in his blood. So he sets out to find him.

Destruction
of Troy.

As he makes his way to his home, hoping yet fearing to see his father Anchises, he passes the temple of the

goddess Vesta, and there he sees Helen—the Greek Helen, Helen of Troy—she who was the cause of all these years of siege and suffering to the Trojans, and of this terrible ruin of their city. She is cowering down in a corner by the altar, trying to hide herself, for she has nothing to hope for from Greek or Trojan. Both are her enemies; for has she not forsaken and betrayed her countrymen, and brought destruction on Troy which sheltered her? When the eyes of Æneas fall upon her, a great rage lays hold of him, and, woman though she be, he would fall upon her and slay her. But at that moment there appears before him his mother, the goddess Venus (for Æneas is the son of a goddess, though his father is a mortal), who bids him take his father, his son, and what followers he can, and set sail to a new country which shall be given to him, his children, and grandchildren for ever.

So Æneas makes his way by by-paths out of the blazing city, bearing his aged father on his back, leading his little son Ascanius by the hand, and followed by his wife Creusa, a daughter of King Priam. When he reached the place of safety, where he had told his comrades to meet him, he found all gathered together—all save one, his wife Creusa. Leaving his father and son in the care of his trusty followers, Æneas in great distress returns to the city to seek her; but in vain he searches amid the smoking ruins, in vain he calls aloud her name—no dear wife comes to him. But at length, when he has almost given up the search in despair, the ghost of Creusa (for she is dead) appears before him, and bids him seek her no more, nor lament too much her loss, but to set sail at once for Italy, where a new home and a new bride, the daughter of a king, are awaiting him. Then, while vainly Æneas tries to clasp her in his

longing arms, she disappears, "light as the wind or like a swiftly-passing dream."

I have not space to tell you the story of Æneas's long wanderings—how he is tossed upon the sea for many years, and suffers shipwreck and other misfortunes and trials. But at length he reached Italy, and there he married Lavinia, the daughter of a Latin king; and there, after generations of his grandchildren had passed away, there sprang up a new and greater Troy—the city of Rome, named from its first king, Romulus, who called Trojan Æneas his ancestor.



COIN OF OCTAVIANUS.

CHAPTER VIII.

HYPATIA—THE DECAY OF GREEK CIVILIZATION.

THE reign of Augustus, the first emperor of Rome, was on the whole a time of peace and of prosperity for the great city; but nevertheless it was the beginning of the end of Roman greatness. The Roman people had lost their old ideal; they had no longer the freedom of their state at heart; they were no longer willing to sacrifice life and happiness, or even ease and comfort, to secure it. The wealth, too, that poured into Rome from the various conquered countries helped to weaken and corrupt the people. Year by year they became more fond of ease and splendour and luxury; year by year they became less willing to work, or to exert themselves in any way—even to fight for their own country; and as there was plenty of money to hire other people to fight for them, they began to think that it was altogether beneath the dignity of a free-born Roman citizen to do so himself. For they became proud and haughty, as well as idle and luxurious.

Still, though not in true greatness, Rome continued to grow in *size* even after the reign of Augustus, until, as I have told you already, it stretched over all the world—all the world, that is, which was known at the time; for it was not till long after the fall of the Roman

empire that America and Australia were discovered. For centuries, a Roman governor ruled in our own island of Britain, as well as in countries even more distant from Rome.

I am going to pass over the first four hundred years of the Christian era. The history of that time is not pleasant to read: it is full of the accounts of petty wars with uncivilized peoples, which could bring no glory to the Roman conquerors; of the fierce struggles by which one ambitious man after another raised himself to the throne; and of the treachery and crimes by which one emperor after another kept himself on it. For though some of the emperors were good, well-meaning men, most of them were as wicked and cruel as they could be.

State of
Rome
during the
first four
centuries
of the
Christian
era.

It was in the reign of the first emperor, Augustus, that there happened the most important event in the history of the world—the birth of our Lord. When, many years after it, the Christian religion began to spread in Rome, it gave a good opportunity to some of the wicked emperors of showing their cruelty and brutality; and many were the Christian men and women who were put to death by horrible torture because they would not give up their faith. There is a story that the Emperor Nero (54–68 A.D.)—one of the most cruel and wicked men who ever lived—once set fire to Rome, that he might have the pleasure of seeing how Troy looked in flames, and afterwards accused the Christians in the city of having done it. He then ordered several of them to be seized and put to death in the most inhuman way: some were wrapped in the skins of wild beasts, and were then hunted and torn to pieces by dogs; and others were

Persecution
of the early
Christians.

covered with pitch and then set on fire in the gardens of the emperor's palace, while the emperor and his wicked friends looked on in amusement. During the times of the emperors, the Romans, who had got to hate work and fighting, were very fond of shows of all sorts; and they had a huge circus built, called the Colosseum, the ruins of which are still standing in Rome. Here the Christians who would not renounce their religion were sometimes made to fight on the stage with wild beasts, for the amusement of the Romans, who sat and looked on in safety, sometimes applauding and sometimes hissing.

But at last, in the fourth century A.C., one of the emperors, Constantine, became a Christian himself, in consequence, it is said, of having seen the appearance of a cross in the sun; and in 313 A.D. he proclaimed that every one was to be free to worship in any way he liked; and the Christians were allowed to get back again the land and money which had been taken from them. It was not very long afterwards, in 325 A.D., that the great conference of Christian clergy, the Council of Nicæa, was held.

After Constantine's proclamation, hundreds of people became Christians; but though they believed in the Christian religion, they were still, at least many of them, far from possessing the gentle, forgiving spirit of their great Master, as you will see when I tell you the story of Hypatia. Before I pass on to it, however, I should like to mention here that the same emperor Constantine removed his seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, a town on the shores of the Bosphorus, the strait between the Sea

Constantine
becomes a
Christian.

He pro-
claims
liberty
to the
Christians,
313 A.D.

Council
of Nicæa,
325 A.D.

Constan-
tinople
becomes
the seat
of the
Roman
empire.

of Marmora and the Black Sea. This town he greatly enlarged and improved, naming it in honour of himself Constantinople, by which name it is known to this day. When, not very long after the time of Constantine, the Roman empire, grown too large for one king to rule over it, was divided into two—the empire of the East and the empire of the West—Constantinople became the capital of the eastern, while Rome remained the seat of the western empire.

Division
of the
Roman
empire.

It was about the end of the fourth century A.C. that Hypatia was born at Alexandria. I have already told you that Alexander the Great of Macedon founded a town in Egypt, which he called after himself Alexandria, so that it was more than six hundred years old when Hypatia was born there. At that time, as it had been for centuries, it was one of the most celebrated and most important towns in the world. If you will look at it on your map, you will see that it held a very important position. It was on the way between Europe and India; for at that time people always went from Europe to India by the Red Sea, and it was a central meeting-place for merchants from Europe, Asia, and Africa. There the merchants of India would exchange for Roman money their rich silks and perfumes and precious stones, which were afterwards to adorn the proud, luxurious Roman ladies.

Birth of
Hypatia.

But Alexandria was a great centre not only of commerce but also of learning. After the fall of Greece, it was at Alexandria that learned men from all parts of the world gathered, attracted no doubt by the splendid library which the city contained. During the first three centuries after its foundation, the city was the capital of the kingdom of the Ptolemies—the descend-

ants of Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals, who, on the death of Alexander, became king of Egypt; but in the reign of Augustus, Egypt became a province of Rome.

Hypatia was the daughter of Theon, a great mathematician. When she was a girl, she showed so much talent that her father sent her to Athens to study; and there she learned to love with all her heart beautiful Greece and everything Greek—above all, Greek learning. Now, at that time (more than half a century after Constantine's celebrated proclamation of liberty to the Christians), the Christian religion had come to be the religion of the great Roman empire; but, though Christians in name, the people were still far from understanding the true meaning of Christianity, and they often did as wicked, cruel things to the Pagans, as the followers of the old Greek and Roman religion were called, as their Pagan fathers and grandfathers had done to the Christians. Amongst other acts of these early Christians was the destruction of many of the beautiful buildings and works of art of the Greeks. We hear of bands of monks in the fourth century wandering about from place to place tearing down and destroying whatever treasure of Greek art or learning they could lay hands on. They were foolish enough to think that it was doing God a service to do away with every trace of the genius of Greece, to efface, over the wide empire of Rome, the footsteps of Beauty—the spirit which God had sent into the world to prepare the way for the coming of his Son.

You can well imagine how the heart of Hypatia, in which the dying Greek spirit was still alive and strong in all its beauty, must have swelled to bursting when

she heard of deeds like these. Hypatia was not a Christian. Very likely the fierce zeal and destructive acts of those well-meaning but foolish monks would prejudice her against the religion of which they were the professed followers, and prevent her from giving serious attention to the Christian Bible. At any rate, she remained through life what she had been brought up—a Pagan.

When she returned to her native city from Athens, accomplished in all the learning of the Greeks, and with a heart aglow with reverence for all that was great and beautiful and noble in ancient Greece, she began to give lectures on science and philosophy, which were attended by many of the learned men of Alexandria. It was not only her learning which drew people to her lectures. We are told that she was remarkably beautiful, amiable, and attractive; and Orestes, the governor of Alexandria, had such a high opinion of her wisdom, that he would often consult her on matters concerning the government of the city.

For some years after her return home, Hypatia seems to have led a peaceful life, occupied in thinking, in reading her beloved old Greek philosophers, and in teaching, till about 412 A.D., when a new bishop, or patriarch as he was called, was appointed to Alexandria. This was Cyril, a zealous but fierce Christian, possessing none of that gentle, forgiving spirit which ought to be characteristic of all true followers of Christ, and hating "heretics" with an intense hatred which often led him to commit acts of cruelty. Between the bishop and the governor, the friend of Hypatia, there seems to have been a strong feeling of jealousy, which broke out some three years or

so after the appointment of Cyril, when there arose a dispute between them.

Almost ever since the foundation of Alexandria, a very large number of Jews had lived in the city. They were peaceful citizens enough; but Cyril could not endure that the people who had crucified Christ should dwell in a Christian city of which he was bishop, so he asked the governor to send them away. Orestes consulted Hypatia, and, acting on her advice, refused to grant the bishop's request. Cyril was very angry at this refusal, and the wrath of his zealous followers rose to such a height that they were carried on to commit an act that is one of the very foulest blots on the history of the Christian Church.

As Hypatia was driving in her chariot one day through the well-known streets, on her way to give her usual lecture, her mind probably pondering on some deep thought of Plato or Aristotle, and heeding little what was around her, her chariot was suddenly stopped and surrounded by a hooting, hissing rabble. Starting up, Hypatia gazed around her in amazement on the sea of furious faces, and on the fierce eyes that glared with hatred upon her. In her clear accents, full of a gentle and calm dignity, she tried to soothe the excited mob; but her words were drowned in loud shouts of—"Down with Pagans! Down with Jews! To the church with her!"

Then the beautiful, unoffending woman was roughly dragged by dozens of rude hands to a church
Death of Hypatia, —a Christian church!—that stood near.
415 A.D. There, before the altar sacred to the God of mercy, they stripped her and tore her limb from limb—cut her to pieces with oyster-shells, one writer says.

So perished Hypatia, the last of the Greeks; she in

whom the Greek spirit may be said to have died, or rather to have fallen asleep, only to awake again, with new beauty and strength, in what is called the Renaissance. The classical period is now at an end: the learning of Greece and the power of Rome have each done what they could to civilize and raise mankind. It remains for the religion of purity and love to complete what they have begun.



ALEXANDRIA.
(*Museum Florentinum.*)

PART II.

FROM THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE WEST TO THE REFORMATION.

CHAPTER I.

KING ARTHUR—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SAXONS IN BRITAIN.

WE are now going to pass over into our own island of Britain. I have told you that for centuries it was part of the great Roman empire, ruled by a Roman governor, and garrisoned by a Roman army. The first description which we have of the island and of its people, too, was written by a Roman—the great Julius Cæsar, who, you will remember, came over to Britain and conquered some of the native tribes in 55 B.C., though it was not till a century later that the country became a Roman province.

Description of the ancient Britons.	At the time when Cæsar came over, the inhabitants of Britain, or the Britons as they were called, were little better than savages, living in mud huts, and clothed in the skins of beasts; but during the three hundred and more years that
Effect of the Roman conquest.	they were under the rule of Roman governors, they learned a great many useful arts from their conquerors—they learned to read and to write, to build stone houses, to weave, and to

make roads. Many of them, too, became Christians at this time. Altogether, the conquest of Britain by the civilized people of Rome turned out to be a very good thing for the conquered people, though it was not easy for them to believe that at first, and many times some chief or other bolder than the rest rose up in arms to try to free his country from the invader.

Meantime, as we have seen, the great empire of Rome was drawing near its end. Though I have made the classical period end with Hypatia (who is indeed the last representative of the purely classical spirit), the Roman empire of the West, of which the city of Rome was the capital, continued to exist, though in a tottering condition, for sixty years after her death, till 476 A.D. Then the last emperor, who, strangely enough, had the same name as the founder of the city—Romulus—was deposed by the chief of a German tribe named Odoacer, who, with many of his followers, had fought his way to Rome.

**Fall of the
Empire of
the West,
476 A.D.**

The last century or more of the existence of the Roman empire of the West is remarkable chiefly on account of the inroads from the north and east of great crowds of rude tribes—Goths and Vandals they were called—who pressed towards Rome. These people, like the tribe that deposed the last emperor of the West, seem to have been related to the Germans. In the fourth century, another and more terrible people came into Europe from Asia—the Huns. They are described as little, dark, deformed men, of ferocious cruelty and quite uncivilized manners, who had no settled dwellings, but wandered about with their flocks and herds from place to place, spreading terror wherever they went. When these people entered Europe, the Goths, who were living

**Inroads of
Goths.**

The Huns.

in the country about the river Danube, were driven from their homes, and, led by the brave Alaric, advanced westwards with their wives and children, their flocks and their herds.

Twice before her final fall, the great city of Rome, the Mistress of the World, as she used to be called,

Rome besieged by Gothic chiefs. suffered the disgrace of being besieged and taken by a Gothic chief—a mere barbarian! It was then (in the first half of the fifth century A.C.) that the Romans found it necessary to recall

Recall of Roman troops from the provinces. their troops from their more distant provinces in order to help to guard their capital itself from the attacks of the barbarians. Like other countries, Britain was delivered from its

Roman garrison and governor. But the state of Britain was not by any means improved by the removal of the Roman troops. The Britons, or at least those living in that part of the island which is now called England (for the Romans never conquered the whole of Scotland), had become civilized during the centuries that the Romans had governed them, and they had been so long at peace that they had almost forgotten how to fight, so that they were easy to conquer by people accustomed to fight. Even before the Romans left the island, great bands of the wild Scots would often swoop down upon the Roman province from the north, and do a great deal of mischief, killing and burning and plundering; while the coasts of the island were frequently attacked by the ships of the Saxons—a rude tribe from the north of Germany. But no sooner were the Romans safely out of the way, than the attacks of the Scots increased so much that the Britons of the south felt quite unable to resist them, and looked about for some one to help them. It is said that a

British king, Vortigern, was foolish enough to ask the Saxons to come and assist him against the Scots, and that two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, came with an army and conquered these wild northerners.

But the Britons had only got rid of one enemy to fall into the hands of a worse one; for when the Saxons saw what a good country Britain was, and how weak its people were, they told their friends in Germany to come over; and soon the unfortunate country was overrun by hosts of fierce Germans—Angles and Saxons and Jutes—who drove the poor Britons into the mountains of Wales and Cornwall and Scotland, where their descendants live to this day, many of them still speaking a Celtic language—Welsh in Wales, or Gaelic in the Scottish Highlands.

Saxons in
Britain,
449 A.D.

Before they were fairly conquered, however, you may be sure that many of the bravest British chiefs did their best to save their country from falling into the hands of the fierce Saxons. And the bravest of them all—the one who fought the hardest and the most nobly for his country—was Arthur, the king of a British tribe on the borders of Wales, who lived about the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century. There is not much about Arthur in history—some historians believe that he was not a *real* person at all—but there is a great deal about him in old tales and ballads; and our late great poet, Tennyson, has made him the hero of several of his grandest poems. In the first of his poems about Arthur, *The Coming of Arthur*, Tennyson gives a very vivid description of the state of Britain after the Romans left it. He tells us how the civilized peace-loving Britons

Tennyson's
"Coming of
Arthur."

“Groaned for the Roman legions here again,
And Cæsar’s eagle.....
And still from time to time the heathen host
Swarmed over seas and harried what was left.
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness,
Wherein the beast was ever more and more,
But man was less and less, till Arthur came.”

I do not suppose the real Arthur, if he ever lived, was half such a fine man as Tennyson makes him. He was surrounded by a great many knights, noble, brave young men, who had vowed with a solemn oath

“To reverence the king as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their king,
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To honour his own word as if his God’s.”

But noble as the knights were, none of them could compare with Arthur, God’s “highest creature here”—the noblest, purest, grandest character you can imagine.

The old poets have woven a great deal of mystery about the coming of Arthur—his birth and proclamation as king—which we cannot believe now-a-days, but which is very beautiful to read about. One story is that, as the old Welsh magician Merlin stood one night on the sea-shore, a wave washed to his feet an infant, who was no other than the future king Arthur. Merlin took the babe and brought him up in solitude; and after many years, when the child grew up to manhood, he came forth before the world and made himself king. At first a great many people would not acknowledge him as king; but after he had done several noble deeds, and had many times conquered the heathen Saxons in fight, people believed in him, and he drew around him many noble followers.

Then he formed his brave band of knights, each of whom had to take the oath I told you of before he could become one of the band. They were called ^{The Knights} the Knights of the Round Table, because the ^{of the} king, not wishing to honour one more than ^{Round Table.} another, or to set one before another, had a large round table made, at which the knights sat at meals, so that no one should have a higher place than his brother knights.

So for some years the Christian knights, led by their noble king, waged a brave war against the heathen host of the Angles and Saxons; and many a glorious battle did they win. But gradually, as the years went on, the knights died one by one, or fell away from their allegiance to Arthur, or quarrelled among themselves, and at length one forgot so far the oath he had sworn as to go against the king whom he had vowed to reverence as his conscience. Then Arthur went forth to meet him, not joyfully, as in the olden days when, with his goodly company of knights, he met the Saxon hosts upon the field, but sadly; for, as he said,—

“The king who fights his people fights himself.
And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke
That strikes them dead is as my death to me.”

All day long the battle raged, and when evening came the remnant of the knights had fallen “man by man about their lord;” only Sir Bedivere, the first of all the knights, was left.

He, when the king too fell wounded on the field, raised him on his shoulders, and bore him to a ruined chapel. Then Arthur, feeling that ^{The “Passing} death was near, put into his last knight’s ^{of Arthur.”} hands his sword Excalibur, and bade him fling it into the

lake near by, and "lightly bring him word" of what he saw. For the story runs that the sword was the gift of the mystic Lady of the Lake; that when first he became king, Arthur had seen an arm, "clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful," arise from out the bosom of the lake, holding a sword, whose hilt glittered with diamonds. Then Arthur (so they said) rowed out into the lake and took the sword, which was a marvel of workmanship. And on the blade on one side were the words, "Take me;" but on the other, "Throw me away!"

And now the time had come to throw Excalibur away. So bold Sir Bedivere took the sword as he was bid; but when he came to the margin of the lake, and drew forth the sword to fling it, the jewels of the hilt sparkled so in the moonlight that he could not find it in his heart to do what he had come to do. Instead, he hid Excalibur among the sedges of the lake; and to King Arthur's questions of what he had seen or heard, answered,—

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

Then Arthur was angry at this disobedience of his knight, and sent him forth again to hurl the sword into the lake. But again the wondrous beauty of the sword so worked upon the knight that he could not fling it away. Again he hid it in the reeds, and returning, told the king.

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

Then great was the anger of the dying king, and so bitterly he rebuked the knight that Bedivere arose in haste and ran, and took the sword, and with shut eyes flung it into the lake. Then back he came to Arthur,

who, breathing heavily—for his end was near—said to him,—

“Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard or seen?”

So Bedivere told how he had hurled the sword with closed eyes, not trusting himself to look upon it; and how when he looked again he saw an arm, “clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,” that took Excalibur, and three times brandished it, and drew it under the water. Then, at the bidding of his king, Sir Bedivere bore his helpless body to the margin of the lake; and soon there hove in sight a barge, “dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,” and in it were three queens with golden crowns and mourning garments. Sadly Sir Bedivere placed the wounded king within the barge, as he was bid to do, and then swiftly and silently it glided out of sight into the darkness.

Such is the tale that poets tell. I cannot say that it is true; but this at least we will believe, that centuries ago, when the power of Rome had fallen, there lived in our own land, and fought against the hosts of heathen Angles and Saxons, a noble Christian king—King Arthur. And not in vain he fought, although he was not able to drive the heathen from the country which bears their name to-day—*England*, the land of the *Angles*.



CHAPTER II.

CHARLEMAGNE—THE SECOND EMPIRE OF THE WEST.

FROM the fall of the first Roman empire of the West to the foundation of the second by Charlemagne in 800 A.D., the history of Europe is chiefly an account of the fights of the savage tribes of Goths and Lombards and Saxons and Franks, their settlement in the various countries of western Europe, and their gradual conversion to Christianity. Much that is most interesting gathers round the lives of the saints—the good men and women who, like Augustine and Columba in our own country, did their best to teach the gospel of Christ to the heathen tribes among whom they lived. During these three centuries most of the Saxons in Britain became Christians; but they were still very rude and uncivilized, and often at war with each other (for there were still several kings ruling in England).

One great power still remained in Europe—the Roman empire of the East, of which Constantinople was the capital; but it was slowly passing into decay, and I do not think there is much in its history at this time which you would find interesting, or which it is important for you to know. One thing, however, which it is well to know about it is, that twice dur-

ing this period Constantinople was besieged (though not taken) by the Arabs, a people who rose to great importance during the seventh century, and of whom you shall hear more again.

Constanti-
nople
besieged by
Arabs, 668
and 716 A.D.

Meantime in Italy one rude Teutonic or German tribe followed on the footsteps of another. Odoacer, the German chief who had deposed the last emperor of Rome, was himself put to death by the Ostrogoths (East-Goths), who ruled in Italy for about sixty years. Afterwards, in 568, the Lombards or Longobards, who came from about the centre of Germany, conquered Italy, where twenty-one Lombard kings bore sway until the kingdom was finally overthrown by Charlemagne.

The Ostro-
goths in
Italy.

The Lom-
bards in
Italy, 568-
774 A.D.

Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, was by race a Frank. The Franks, when first we hear of them, were a tribe of people dwelling on the east bank of the Rhine; but afterwards they conquered the country which was then called Gaul, but has since been called, from the name of its conquerors, France.

Conquest of
Gaul by
the Franks.

The grandfather of Charlemagne, whose name was also Charles, was a very brave and skilful warrior, and was given the surname of *Martel*, or the Hammer, in consequence of the way in which he beat the Arabs at the battle of Tours in 732—one of the most important battles that had been fought for centuries. The Arabs had conquered Spain early in the eighth century, and would no doubt have conquered France too, if Charles Martel had not met and defeated them at Tours so completely that never again did they venture to enter France.

Battle of
Tours,
732 A.D.

Charles Martel was not king of the Franks, but only the mayor of the palace, or the chief officer of the king; but his son Pepin, the father of Charlemagne, became king with the consent of the Pope, and on his death his son ruled in his stead.

Charlemagne was born in 742. When he was a boy he was not sent to school, as all boys are now-a-days.

**Birth of
Charle-
magne,
742 A.D.**

After the fall of Rome the schools had been mostly destroyed by the attacks of the various heathen tribes that invaded the empire, and for centuries—centuries known as the Dark Ages—learning was almost forgotten, except by a few Greeks in Constantinople, or by a solitary monk here and there. But though he was not taught from books, he was taught the various arts of war; and while quite a boy he accompanied his father, who was himself a brave soldier and a skilful statesman, on a great expedition against the Lombards in Italy, and thus had an early experience of actual warfare.

It was in return for his services against the Lombards that the pope consented to make Pepin king of the Franks. Charlemagne was only a boy of about twelve when, with solemn pomp and ceremony, his father was anointed king, and he himself was baptized, by the pope's own hands at Münster, a town which you will still see marked in the map of North Germany. You can imagine what a deep impression the scene must have made on the boy's imagination, and how often afterwards he must have dreamed of the time when he himself should be king, and of all the great things that he would do.

Pepin, as you will have seen, was a Christian, and looked upon himself as the champion of the pope and of Christianity against the different heathen tribes.

When Charlemagne grew up and became king, which he did in 768, at the age of twenty-six, he too made it one of his greatest aims to defend and extend Christianity wherever he could, and to conquer the heathen whom he could not convert. He had not been very long king when he led his army against the Saxons, a wild people in the north of Germany, numbers of whom, as we have seen, had gone over to Britain more than three centuries before, and were now masters there. The object of this war, as Charlemagne himself declared, was to convert the heathen to Christianity, "the true and saving faith." To us now-a-days it seems a very strange thing that any one should have thought of preaching the gospel of peace with the edge of the sword; but Charlemagne, great though he was, did not understand fully the true meaning of the religion of which he professed himself a follower, any more than did the fierce rabble who tore Hypatia limb from limb in Alexandria more than three hundred years before. The ugliest blot on the memory of Charlemagne is an act of cruelty which he committed upon these poor Saxons, who, if they were fierce and rude and uncultured, showed great courage in the way in which they fought and struggled for their freedom against the power of the great king. For thirty years the struggle lasted, during which time again and again the Saxons were defeated, and they rose up again and again after Charlemagne thought they were finally settled. At last on one occasion he had hardly left their country, after making arrangements for peace with them, when he heard that they had again risen in rebellion. In great anger at this breach of the treaty just made, he hastened back and ordered about four thousand prisoners, who refused to

Charle-
magne be-
comes king,
768 A.D.

His wars
with the
Saxons.

become Christians, to be put to death. Even after that, the Saxons rose against him again under their brave leader Wittikind; but they were finally defeated, and Wittikind and his wife were obliged to be baptized and to adopt the Christian religion. Then Charlemagne, in order to divide the people, took great numbers of them from their homes, and sent them to other parts of his empire; and he was never troubled by them again.

But you must not suppose that during all these thirty years Charlemagne was fighting only with the Saxons. During that time the great kingdom which his father had left had grown on all sides. In 774, at the request of the pope, whom the Lombards had attacked, he had entered Italy, besieged the king of the Lombards in Pavia, south of Milan, and completely conquered him, after which all that large part of Italy which had belonged to the Lombards for more than two hundred years became part of his empire, and he was acknowledged as chief over the whole of northern Italy.

Four years later, some Christian chiefs in Spain begged him to come and help them against the Arabs, or Moors as they were called, who, as I told you, had conquered that country about half-a-century before. So Charlemagne got together his army, and accompanied by some of his brave paladins, as his chief nobles were called, he set out for Spain. They crossed the Pyrenees, the high mountains which, as you know, separate France from Spain, and made their way as far as the river Ebro, conquering all who opposed them. But on their journey homewards a very sad event happened, which became the favourite subject for the songs of poets centuries afterwards.

Conquest
of the
Lombards,
774 A.D.

Expedition
into Spain,
778.

This was the death of young Roland, the nephew of Charlemagne, and the noblest of his paladins.

As the story goes (but I must warn you that this is not *history*), the army of Charlemagne, in a long column, was making its way homewards through a narrow pass in the Pyrenees called Roncesvalles—Roland, who had command of the rear-guard, being far behind the front ranks, where Charlemagne himself rode. Now a wicked traitor, who hated Roland for some reason or other, had told the enemy how the French army was returning; so, when Charlemagne and the main body of the army were well in front, suddenly Roland with his small rear-guard was attacked by thousands of armed men. For a long time the small band of the Franks defended themselves with the greatest bravery, and thousands of the enemy fell around them. Roland had a wonderful horn, which could be heard for miles away; but he would not blow it until he saw that all was lost. Then he blew a long clear note, which echoed among the hills, and reached the ears of Charlemagne himself. But the traitor, Ganelon, was with him, and persuaded him that the sound he heard was not the horn of Roland, but something else. Then again Roland blew his horn, again the great leader heard and would have turned back, but again the traitor persuaded him to advance. Then Roland blew with all the strength that remained to him, till his cheeks were nearly bursting and the veins rose big and swollen on his brow; and so loud and strong was the note he blew that this time Charlemagne knew he was not mistaken, and hastened back, only to find his brave paladin and all his followers lying dead. But terrible was the vengeance which he took upon the foe—so runs the story.

But I do not wish to write of nothing but battles,

or I might tell you of another great expedition which Charlemagne led against some savage tribes dwelling in the country about the Danube; and how he planned and at once set men to work at a canal between this great river and the river Maine. If you will consult your map of Europe, you will see that this canal would connect the Black Sea and the Mediterranean with the North Sea; and you can well imagine how it would have helped to bring the different countries he had conquered into one united kingdom if it had been completed. But it never was. I think this scheme of the canal helps us to understand better than anything else he did in his life what was the dream of Charlemagne. His dream was, I think, the union of all the countries he had conquered—of all the heathen tribes that for centuries had been constantly at war with one another—into one great empire, the new Empire of the West, in which the power and the learning of ancient Rome should be united with the religion of Christ.

This dream must have seemed to be realized when, on Christmas-day of the year 800, in a church in Rome in which the sacred day was being celebrated with all pomp and magnificence, the pope brought forth a crown and placed it on the head of Charlemagne, hailing him as “Emperor of Rome,” while hundreds of voices with loud shouts re-echoed the words. So in the city where Julius Cæsar had fallen a sacrifice to liberty, a barbarian and a Christian assumed the crown which Cæsar’s fellow-citizens would not let him wear. The Roman Empire of the West, which had fallen more than three hundred years before, was now restored.

The remaining fourteen years of his life Charlemagne

Proposed
canal be-
tween the
Danube and
Maine.

Charlemagne
crowned
emperor
at Rome,
800 A.D.

spent chiefly in strengthening the boundaries of his empire (in particular he placed forts along the coast-line, to protect the empire from the invasions of the Normans and the Danes, which had already begun), in trying to spread among his subjects a knowledge of the arts of peace, in founding schools, and in encouraging learning by every means in his power. Learned men from all countries were invited to settle in the empire ; and one in particular, the great English scholar Alcuin, was persuaded to be for years the tutor of the emperor and his family.

Scarcely a year before his death, Charlemagne, feeling that he had become old and feeble, resolved to make his son Louis (the only son left to him) his colleague in the empire. There was a solemn scene one Sunday in the grand cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, when the aged emperor publicly declared his resolution, and earnestly reminded his son of the duties of a good sovereign, bidding him put the crown on his head.

Charlemagne
makes his
son his
colleague.

After that he retired from public life, living quietly at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he died in 814. His death, 814 A.D.
His last words were, "Now, Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit."



CHARLEMAGNE.

CHAPTER III.

ROLLO—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE NORMANS IN FRANCE.

YOU have heard a good deal lately about the northern tribes of Europe—the Goths, the Saxons, and the Franks. Now I am going to tell you about another northern people of whom we read a great deal during the centuries following the time of Charlemagne—the Northmen, or Danes, or Scandinavians, as they are indifferently called.

At the time we first hear of them, they were living in the northern peninsula of Europe, which is divided into the countries of Sweden and Norway. But
Description of the Northmen. they were not all stay-at-homes, those old Northmen; they were always sailing forth on exploring or plundering expeditions in their little vessels, which were often made of the trunk of a single tree hollowed out. In these little ships they could sail far up quite a shallow creek or river, and so get well within the coast of any country they wanted to attack and plunder. In consequence of their habit of attacking countries in this way, or perhaps because the coast of their own country is so full of creeks or *fiords*, they were often called *Vikings*, or creek-men.

They were a tall, strong, manly race, fair-haired and blue-eyed, with a natural love of adventure, and a spirit of daring which, together with their great bodily strength,

enabled them to endure hardships better than other men. Many are the wonderful tales we can read in the old Norse ballads of the deeds of some viking hero or other, who set forth with a few followers to discover new lands, fight strange people, and bring home rich plunder to his bleak northern country. Although their ships were such wretched things compared with the splendid vessels which sail our seas now-a-days, there is no doubt that they discovered Greenland as early as the ninth century; and there is good reason for believing that several centuries before Columbus made his celebrated voyage (as early as the second or third year of the eleventh century), more than one small expedition of Norsemen landed on the coast of America, which they called Vinland, or vine-land, in consequence of finding grapes growing in the country. But as they did not found a colony there, the other peoples of Europe did not know anything about their discoveries, and it is only in old Icelandic books that we read about them. At a much earlier period they had colonized Iceland and our own islands of Orkney and Shetland, which they ruled over for many centuries. In the eighth century they began to attack the coasts of England and France; and we have seen that the mighty Charlemagne was obliged to build forts to protect his empire from their attacks. In England, from the end of the eighth to the middle of the eleventh century, these wild sea-rovers caused great trouble, overrunning the country and fighting the inhabitants. Even Alfred the Great, who from 871 till 901 was king in England, could for long do nothing against the invaders, and was obliged to hide from them, though

Discovery
of Green-
land and
America.

Coloniza-
tion of Ice-
land and
the Ork-
neys and
Shetlands by
Norsemen.

Invasions
of England
by the
Northmen.

afterwards he overcame them in many battles, and finally made peace with them. Later on, England was ruled for thirty years by Danish or Norse kings; and finally, in 1066, it was conquered by a descendant of these old vikings—William the Conqueror.

In France, after the death of Charlemagne, the attacks of the Northmen became much bolder and more frequent than they had been during his life. His son, Louis le Débonnaire, or Louis the Good-natured, was a very weak man; and during his lifetime his own sons deposed him. Afterwards they quarrelled among themselves

**Battle of
Fontenay
and treaty
of Verdun,
843 A.D.**

about who was to have the empire, and a terrible battle was fought between them at Fontenay. But in the end they agreed to sign the treaty of Verdun in 843, by which the empire was divided among them. So only

about thirty years after the death of Charlemagne, the empire of the West, which it had been the dream of his life to found, was broken up. For a few years, later in the same century, it was again united under one ruler, Charles the Fat; but as he was a very weak man, it was again dissolved, and this time for ever. France and Germany were never again united.

**Invasions
of France.**

Of course, the Northmen took advantage of these divisions and battles among the French, to become more daring in their attacks on France. At different times during the ninth century they sailed up the Loire, the Garonne, and

**Siege of
Paris,
885 A.D.**

the Seine, killing and plundering and burning; and in 885 they besieged Paris, and reduced the inhabitants to great suffering.

It was in the reign of Charles the Simple that Rollo made his way to France. Rollo, or Hrolf, or Rou as he is called in France, was

Rollo.

the son of a Scandinavian *jarl* or earl. We are told by a Scandinavian writer that he "was a famous vikingr, and so stout that no horse could carry him. He was therefore obliged to go on foot, and thence was called Ganngo-Rólfr (Rollo the Walker)." When he was a young man, he left his home, and sailed about the seas, living the life of an adventurer and pirate, like many other young Northmen of good birth. Now, at that time the king of Norway, Harald Harfager, wanted to put a stop to this habit of the young Northmen of becoming pirates; and he therefore made strict laws against it. As Rollo broke these laws, the king solemnly ordered him to be banished for life from his native land.

Well, Rollo gathered round him a band of bold young men like himself, and set sail from the country to which he was never to return, after no doubt parting sadly from his mother, who had done her best, with prayers and tears, to induce the stern king not to send her son away. The company of adventurers landed at Rouen in France, and laid waste the country round about. Then they sailed up the river Seine; and Charles the Simple advanced to meet them with a large army. When he reached the neighbourhood of the Normans, he sent ambassadors to them who could speak their language, and who asked them why they had come into France. "To conquer it," was the answer. Then the ambassadors asked if they would not rather become vassals of King Charles; and the whole band shouted with one voice, "No!"

Rollo leaves
his country
and goes
to France.

So there was a battle fought, in which the French were completely defeated and took to flight. After that, the Normans advanced still further into France, and wherever they fought they were victorious. After

laying waste a great deal of the country, Rollo retired to Rouen, where he was chosen as chief by his comrades, and where he began to settle and order his colony. Now he began to appear in quite a different character from the rude, savage sea-rover that he was at first. We hear that, though he was a pagan and a foreigner, he was such a mild, though firm, ruler that crowds of Christians of the country gathered round him.

For seven years we do not hear much of him ; but in 911 he planned an expedition of all his people up the great rivers, into the centre of France. When Charles the Simple heard of the advance of the Normans, he was greatly alarmed, and offered to make peace with Rollo, promising to give him and his heirs that part of France which is now called Normandy. Rollo accepted the offer ; and he with his followers met the king and all his nobles to take the necessary oaths. It is said that when Rollo was requested to kiss the king's toe in token of submission to him, he haughtily refused, but bade one of his followers do it instead of him. This man, who did not like the humiliating task any more than his chief, lifted the king's toe so high that he tilted backwards and fell on the ground, causing great laughter among the Normans.

So Rollo and his followers settled down in the country which was given them, and which they called from their own name Normandy. Rollo divided the land among the chief of his followers, in return for which they were to acknowledge him as their duke or leader, and follow him to battle when he summoned them. This was the beginning of the feudal system which the descendant of Rollo, William the Conqueror, introduced into England.

By-and-by Rollo became a Christian ; and gradually,

as the years went on, the Norman invaders adopted the religion, the customs, and even the language of the people among whom they had settled. When William the Conqueror came over to this country, the language which he and his followers spoke was not the language of the old vikings—not the language of Rollo and Harald Harfager; but rather that of Julius Cæsar and his Roman legions, wonderfully changed no doubt as it passed through the ears and lips of Gaul and Frank to those of the Normans. But if the Normans changed their customs, religion, and language, they did not lose their old spirit of daring and adventure. It is the same spirit, refined and elevated by civilization and the religion of Christ, that shows itself later in what was the greatest glory of the Middle Ages—chivalry and the crusades.



VIKING SHIP.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CID—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MOORS IN SPAIN.

NOT even the deeds of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table, of Charlemagne, or of Roland, the bravest of his paladins, have been more often sung in song or celebrated in story than those of Rodrigo (or Ruy) Diaz, the hero of Spain. In some cases, I am afraid, the stories told of him are due to the imagination of the story-teller, so that this chapter cannot be said to be entirely historical. Nevertheless the Cid is a historical character, and even if he did not do all the grand feats attributed to him, he has a right to a place here.

He was born at Burgos, in the north of Spain, somewhere between 1030 and 1040, at the time when the

**Birth of
the Cid.**

Danish kings were ruling in England, and more than quarter of a century before the Norman Conquest. At that time the largest

part of Spain was ruled over by the Moors, who had come from Africa to Spain in the beginning of the eighth century, and had conquered it.

**The Arabs
in Spain.**

There is a story that they had been invited to come by an enemy of the king who was ruling in

**Roderick,
the last of
the Goths.**

Spain at the time. This king, whose name was Roderick, has sometimes been called "the last of the Goths," because he was the last king

of the Visigoths or West-Goths, who, after the fall of Rome, had founded a kingdom in Spain, as the Ostrogoths or East-Goths had done in Italy. It is said that Roderick had given offence to a certain Count Julian, who, in revenge, invited the Arabs to come over from Africa, which they had just conquered.

So, under their leader Tarik, they crossed over to Europe and landed in the south of Spain, where the British flag is flying to-day—on the peninsula which was then called Calpe, but which has since been called, from the name of the Arab leader, Gibraltar, or the *mountain of Tarik*. Roderick got together an army, and met the invaders in battle; but he was completely defeated, and, in flying from the enemy, was drowned in the Guadalquivir, one of the great rivers of Spain (711 A.D.). After that, the Arabs conquered all the people, except a few brave Goths, who took refuge among the high mountains in the north. It was after this conquest of Spain that the Arabs advanced far into France; and were finally put to flight by the grandfather of Charlemagne at Tours.

During the centuries that they ruled the land, the Moors do not seem to have treated the people of Spain with great cruelty or severity. They were more civilized than the Goths. Among them were many learned men who, during those dark ages, when all the learning of Greece and Rome seemed to be lost for ever, did more than any other people at the time for the cause of science. They studied the works of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, and even translated them; they did a great deal for the science of medicine and for chemistry; and they were also distinguished by their knowledge of mathematics and arithmetic. But they were not Christians; they were followers of the religion of

Islam, or Mohammedanism, as it is called from the name of the founder Mohammed, who was born in the sixth century A.C.

Naturally, the Christians did not like to be ruled over by Mohammedans; and as the years went on, the brave people who had taken refuge among the mountains at the time of the Moorish conquest, gradually recovered a great deal of the country in the north from their conquerors. At the time the Cid was born, there was more than one Christian king ruling in the north, though the Moors or Arabs still held the larger part of the country; and many were the battles that were fought between Christian and Mohammedan.

It was the part he bore in these battles that made Rodrigo Diaz, afterwards called the Cid, the national hero of Spain. The first great feat that is told of him is that he conquered five Moorish kings. As the story goes, when Rodrigo "was as yet a stripling not twenty summers old," a Moorish army, led by five Moorish kings, entered Castile, a Christian kingdom in the north of Spain, laying waste, and burning and plundering; and great was the hurt which the good country suffered at their hands, and many were the captives, both men and women, whom they carried off, as well as flocks and herds. But when Rodrigo heard what had happened, he mounted his horse, and rode forth and gathered round him a company of followers. With these he followed after the Moors, and overtook them among the mountains of Oca, and swiftly fell upon them and put them to flight, and took the five kings captive. Then he divided the spoil amongst all—both of those who had fought with him, and of those who had fought against him, he gave to each man his share—and the five kings he sent home free to their own

country. But before they went, they kissed his hand and called him "Cid," which means in their language *lord*; and ever afterwards they acknowledged him as their chief, and sent him rich tribute.

After that, many were the brave deeds which "my Cid" did in the service of the king Don Ferrando of Castile, and many were the battles which he won—so many that, if I were to try to tell you of them all, I should fill this book with nothing else. But better than all his deeds of strength and feats of arms was his conduct to the poor leper, of which I shall tell you the story.

After his victory over the five Moorish kings, Rodrigo set out on a pilgrimage with twenty knights as followers. And as they journeyed on their way, they came upon a leper who was fast stuck in a mire, and who shouted with loud cries to them to help him. Well, the other knights passed on, and would not so much as reach out a hand to pull the poor man out. But the Cid leaped from his horse, and helped him out of the mire, and placed him before him on the saddle, and so carried him to where the pilgrims were to pass that night. And at supper he placed the leper beside him at table, and bade him eat out of his own plate. At this his knights, in sore indignation, rose up and left the room. But Rodrigo ordered a bed to be got ready, and he and the leper slept together. Now at midnight the Cid was awake out of his sleep by feeling, as it were, a cold breath pass right through him between his two shoulders; and he looked about him, and lo, the leper was gone! But afterwards there appeared before him a spirit in white and dazzling raiment, who spoke to him and said, "I, whom thou didst take for a poor leper, and didst help—I am Saint Lazarus. And in

return for what thou hast done for the love of God, it shall be that whenever that breath which thou hast felt shall pass through thee, thou mayest ask whatever thou wilt, and it shall be accomplished. Thou shalt be feared by Moor and Christian, and never shall thy enemies prevail over thee." And having spoken, the spirit vanished.

I have not space to tell of how King Don Ferrando died, of how he had divided his kingdom among his sons, and how they fought together on his death. At first Ruy Diaz, as Rodrigo is often called, fought for King Don Sancho, the eldest son of the old king; and after King Don Sancho was slain, he fought for King Don Alfonso. And faithfully he served King Don Alfonso, and many brave battles he fought in his cause; but after a while the other hidalgos or nobles of the king, who were jealous of my Cid, whispered evil against him to the king. And the king believed them, and was wroth against Ruy Diaz, and bade him leave his kingdom within nine days, and not return. Then the Cid told his kinsmen and his vassals how the king had banished him from his country; and they all answered that they would follow him wherever he went.

So the Cid went forth sadly from his home, and rode out of the city of Burgos, followed by his faithful kinsmen and vassals. And the men and women of Burgos were at the windows of their houses to see him pass; and they wept at the thought of Ruy Diaz, the Campeador (champion), leaving the city for ever. Then he rode to the monastery where he had sent his wife and his little girls to remain till he should send for them under the care of a holy abbot; and his chronicler tells us that "the parting between them was like separating the nail from the quick flesh."

Well, the Cid and his followers wandered about from city to city, and many battles did they win against the Moors in open field, and many a town they took by siege, and much spoil they gained. But for a while, I am sorry to tell you, Ruy Diaz turned his arms against his brother Christians and his king. For the king, after he had banished him the first time, recalled the Cid to fight for him; and again he banished him a second time, because the other hidalgos whispered lies against him as they had done before. Then Rodrigo was wroth against the king, and for a while he fought against him and laid waste his land; but afterwards they were reconciled. Then the Cid fought no more against his king, but against the Moors.

After much wandering and fighting and plundering, Rodrigo and his followers at last besieged the town of Valencia. Now Valencia is a very strong city in the east of Spain, and they had long waiting and hard work before they could take it; but take it they did in the end. I cannot tell you here all the story of the siege, but you can read it in the *Chronicle of the Cid*, written in English by the poet Southey from the Spanish of the old poets and chroniclers. When at last the Moors opened the gates of the city, they were, as the chronicle tells us, "like men risen from the grave—yea, like the dead when the trumpet shall sound for the day of judgment, and men shall come out of their graves:" for they had had but little food while the long siege lasted.

So the conquerors entered in and took possession of the city, and the Cid ruled in it. Then he sent a trusty follower to fetch his wife and daughters to him there; and great was his joy when he heard of their coming; and he rode forth to meet them on his good horse

Bavieca, whose fame equals that of Bucephalus, the horse of Alexander.

After his wife and daughters were come, he ruled peacefully in Valencia for five years, and his wife abode with him, and his daughters also until their marriages. And during all that time, as the chronicle tells us, "he sought to do nothing but to serve God, and to keep the Moors quiet who were under his dominion."

But after the five years were past, there came a great Moorish host against the city, led by King Bucar of Morocco. And the Cid was now old and feeble, and he felt that his end was near; but he was told in a vision that he should conquer King Bucar, not indeed living but dead. So he called together the noblest of his followers, and told them how he had been warned that he must leave them in thirty days, and advised them

what they should do, when he was no more, to conquer the Moors. And on the twenty-ninth day thereafter he took his leave of his dear wife and of his faithful followers, and on the following day (May 29, 1099) he died.

Then his followers did what he had told them: they made no cries nor lamentations to let it be known among the Moors that their lord was no more; but they bathed his body and anointed it with ointment and embalmed it, and set it up on a saddle and supported it with a framework of boards, so that the body sat upright. And then they put clothes upon it, and placed the saddle and the body on the good horse Bavieca, and they went forth from the city leading the horse. And the Moors were put to flight, and fled to the sea and took ship. But the Christians journeyed on till they came to the country of King Don Alfonso; and there the Cid was buried with great pomp.

CHAPTER V.

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION—THE CRUSADES.

WHILE the Cid was fighting against the Arabs in Spain, another people had conquered them in Asia, and had taken their great city of Bagdad. These were the Turks, a savage race belonging to the centre of Asia, who about this time rose to great power—to such power, indeed, that they more than once ventured to invade the Roman empire of the East, and to meet the army of the Romans in battle. One emperor of the East even asked them to help him against the Normans, who were attacking the empire.

Bagdad
taken by
Turks, 1055.

The Turks
help the Ro-
man emperor
against the
Normans,
1081.

But what I wish specially to tell you about the Turks at this time is that they conquered the Holy Land, and Jerusalem fell into their hands. Before that time it had been held by the Arabs, who, although they were not Christians, did not interfere with, or ill-treat in any way, the Christian pilgrims who used to flock to Jerusalem to visit the Holy Sepulchre; and we are even told that the great khalif of Bagdad, Haroun-al-Rasheed, of whom you read so much in the *Arabian Nights*, presented the key of the Holy Sepulchre to Charlemagne. The Turks, however, acted quite differ-

Conquest of
Jerusalem
by the
Turks.

ently: no sooner were they in possession of Jerusalem than they began to treat the Christian pilgrims with the greatest rudeness and cruelty.

The complaints of the pilgrims spread all over Europe, and the hearts of the Christians in every country were stirred with anger and indignation. A great
The First Crusade. army, led by nobles of every Christian country of Europe, amongst whom was Robert of

Normandy, eldest son of William the Conqueror, was gathered together, and set out for the Holy Land to punish the infidel Turks, and to protect the Holy Sepulchre and the Christian pilgrims. The war that followed was the First Crusade, or war of the Cross. Every man who fought in the war had a cross marked on his right shoulder. I am not going to tell you here the story of the First Crusade. A great deal of blood was spilt in

Chivalry. it, and a great many lives were lost; but it was the means of stirring up and calling forth what was the noblest thing in the Middle Ages—the spirit of chivalry or knighthood. If it is true that the ideal of the Romans of old was the freedom of Rome, it is true also that the ideal of the noble young men of the Middle Ages was chivalry or knightliness. And this meant a good deal: it meant courage, and military skill, and above all, honour. Every youth of noble family and noble nature nourished in his heart the ambition to become a knight, or to win his spurs, as it was called. And the spurs were not so easily won. Not till he had seen some hard service in the field, or had done some act of unusual daring, living meanwhile a life unspotted by dishonour, could the ambitious youth hope to wear them. The vows which the young knight was called upon to make at the time of the crusades were like a religious oath. He was required to under-

take to support the cause of Christ against infidels, to guard his own honour sacredly, to help the weak against the strong, and to be the champion of woman.

There were many noble young knights in the army of the Crusaders, and wonderful were the feats of arms which some of them performed. In the end they were rewarded by success: the Holy City fell into their hands in 1099, nearly three years after they had first started.

Jerusalem
taken by the
Crusaders,
1099.

During the years that followed, several Christian nobles reigned in turn as king of Jerusalem; and two bodies of Christian knights, the Knights Templars and the Knights Hospitalers, were formed to help to protect the new Christian kingdom. But the Mohammedans gradually became too strong for the small body of Christians; and at last, in 1187, they again took Jerusalem—just eighty-eight years after it had been taken by the Crusaders.

Jerusalem
taken from
the Chris-
tians, 1187.

It was after this that the Third Crusade took place, in which our king, Richard Cœur de Lion, so much distinguished himself. Richard is one of the favourite heroes of English history, thanks rather to the wonderful stories which have gathered round his name than to actual fact. Handsome and powerful, and more than usually daring and courageous, he is just the kind of man about whom the old poets loved to sing and weave marvellous tales of adventure. He himself had picked up some knowledge of music and verse-making from the minstrels of the south of France, where he spent his youth. But in spite of this and other accomplishments—in spite, too, of his great courage—I do not think that Richard was quite the ideal Christian knight; indeed I think he was just a bold, daring,

Character
of Richard.

passionate Northman, like his ancestor Rollo, with some external polish of civilization, with a warm zeal for the cause of the Christian religion, and above all with a burning desire for military glory.

On the death of his father Henry II., he became king of England; and no sooner was he crowned than he began to make preparations for the crusade by selling whatever he could lay his hands on. Land and offices, and whatever men would give money for, he sold. He was heard to say that he would sell London, the capital of his kingdom, to get money. To William, king of Scotland, who had become the vassal of Henry II., he sold his freedom from English sovereignty.

In 1190 he met Philip, king of France; and the two kings, with an army of 100,000 men, set out for the Holy Land. They passed the winter in the island of Sicily, where feelings of jealousy broke out between them which only became stronger with time. In the spring of 1191 they set sail from Sicily for the Holy Land. The English fleet was driven against the island of Cyprus, which you know now belongs to Britain. The king of Cyprus was guilty of ill-treating some of the shipwrecked crews. To punish him, Richard attacked and took Cyprus, deposed the king, and then sold the island to Guy de Lusignan, who was at that time called king of Jerusalem, and whose family reigned afterwards in Cyprus for three hundred years.

When Richard landed at last on the east coast of the Mediterranean, he found Guy de Lusignan, at the head of an army composed largely of pilgrims from Europe, engaged in besieging the town of Acre, which you will

see marked in your map. The siege had lasted for two years, and the Christians were suffering great hardships, which were increased by the breaking out among them of a terrible plague.

Siege of
Acre.

Some German merchants there, who came from the coast of the Baltic Sea, had done what they could for the sufferers by making tents out of the sails of their ships. These men were afterwards formed into a body of knights, like the Knights Templars, and were called the Teutonic Knights. The Teutonic Knights afterwards founded the modern kingdom of Prussia.

The
Teutonic
Knights.

When Richard reached Acre, he was laid up with fever; but so impatient was he to be in the thick of the battle, that, ill though he was, he had himself carried out on a mattress, and directed his men how to make preparations for the siege. During the siege the quarrels between the French and English kings often prevented anything being carried out; but when they did at length act together, they forced Saladin, the brave leader of the Mo-

Surrender
of Acre.

hammedans, to surrender. After the Crusaders took possession of Acre, King Philip returned to France, and Richard was left to carry on the war. He marched southwards towards Jerusalem, which he intended to take; but which, after all, he never even attacked. Disputes and divisions broke out among the leaders of the army;

Division in
the army
of the
Crusaders.

and between Richard and the duke of Austria in particular there grew up an enmity as bitter as that which had existed between Richard and the king of France. There are many stories told to account for this enmity, one of them being that, at the time of the siege of Acre, Richard seized the Austrian flag, which was waving on

the ramparts, and flung it into the ditch. This story may or may not be true; but if it is, Richard paid dearly afterwards for having, in a momentary fit of temper, insulted the pride of the duke of Austria.

After coming almost within sight of Jerusalem, the army of the Crusaders turned back. We are told that, before turning back, Richard was led to the top of a hill, from which the sacred city could be seen. But Richard would not look upon the city he was leaving in the hands of the infidel. While his guide pointed before him to the buildings dimly visible in the distance, the shame-stricken king held up his shield before his face. What feelings must have been his when, as he slowly descended the hill, he thought of what might have been but for those unworthy quarrels among the leaders of a Christian host—when he thought that, but for these, he might have seen the Christian cross flash on the roof of the mosque where it had stood for nearly a century, until torn down by the victorious Mohammedans five years before.

So, sadly and sorrowfully, Richard sailed away from the Holy Land. As its shores slowly faded from his sight, he stretched out his arms towards it, and exclaimed, "Most holy land, I commend thee to the care of the Almighty! May he grant me life to return and deliver thee from the yoke of the infidels!" It was not owing to want of will or want of courage at least that he left it in the hands of the infidel then. During the year or more since his first coming to the Holy Land, Richard had given signal proofs of his great strength and daring in many an attack upon the enemy. His name was feared and honoured by the Mohammedans over all the land, and even after his time, we are told, the Arab would exclaim to his

**The return
of the army.**

**Richard sails
from the
Holy Land.**

horse, when it started and pricked up its ears, "Dost think it is King Richard?"

The English fleet reached Sicily in safety, but the vessel in which the king was sailing with a few followers was tossed about and driven ashore; and after several mishaps Richard found himself wandering about the country of his enemy, the duke of Austria, accompanied by one knight and a boy, his other followers having been seized and imprisoned. For a while Richard, disguised as a pilgrim, and with his beard unshaven, wandered on without being recognized; but at last he fell into the hands of the duke, who took care not to lose the opportunity of avenging himself for the insults he had suffered in the Holy Land. Richard was placed in a strong castle, where he remained closely guarded for about four months.

Richard
is taken
prisoner by
the duke of
Austria.

There is a pretty story told of how, when the people in England were all in ignorance of the whereabouts of their king, Richard's faithful minstrel, Blondel, set out to find his master; how he wandered about for a long time without finding any trace of him; and how at last one day when, wearied with his wanderings, he had sat down to rest outside the walls of the strong castle of Trifels, the notes of an old French song which Richard used to sing floated out to his ears. Eagerly the minstrel took up the song, and sang aloud and clearly the following verse, then listened breathless and with beating heart. Again the voice within—the voice which now the faithful minstrel knew to be the king's—took up the strain. Then wild with joy Blondel set forth, and told how he had at last found the king, and soon Richard was set free by the payment of a large ransom, which his poor subjects were heavily taxed to make up.

The story
of Blondel.

Richard is
ransomed.

History does not vouch for the truth of Blondel's part in this story, but there is no doubt that the king was set free on the payment of a heavy ransom, and returned to England.

He did not remain long in his kingdom, however. Not long after his return he heard that his estates in France had been attacked, and he hastened over to the Continent to protect them. There he was wounded during a siege, and he died before he was able to fulfil his vow to lead another crusade to the Holy Land.



CHAPTER VI.

DANTE—THE GUELPHS AND THE Ghibelines—THE RISE OF MODERN POETRY.

YOU have heard a great deal hitherto about fights and fighting-men ; now I am going to tell you about a poet—the greatest poet since the time of Virgil, or perhaps, as some say, since Homer—Dante, the greatest poet of Italy and the first of modern times.

Dante, or, to give his name in full, Dante Alighieri, was born in 1265 in Florence, a city which, like many other cities of Italy at that time, Birth of
Dante, 1265. or like the cities of ancient Greece, was a republic governed by its own citizens. In the ninth century, when, as you remember, the Northmen were wandering about attacking and plundering whatever and wherever they could, and when Rise of
the Italian
cities. the Arabs too had spread into Europe, the Italian cities were surrounded with strong walls, to protect the peaceful citizens from the attacks of those rude tribes ; and since then they had gradually risen in importance and prosperity.

Three centuries later, not very many years before Richard Cœur de Lion led his army of Crusaders to the Holy Land, and when his father, Henry II., was ruling in England, the cities of Lombardy had to fight hard for their freedom against the tyranny of the emperor of

Germany. I told you that, after the death of Charlemagne, his empire was broken up, and France was ruled over by one king and Germany by another. But the king of Germany still called himself emperor, and he was acknowledged as chief by a large part of Italy. Now Frederick Barbarossa, or Red Beard, who was emperor of Germany from 1152 till 1190, was not content with being acknowledged as chief by the free cities of Lombardy. He made up his mind to take their freedom from them. Then the cities united together against the emperor, and formed what was called the League of Lombardy; and bravely they fought in defence of their freedom. In the end they conquered the emperor in a great battle, and then there was a treaty, called the Peace of Constance, by which they secured their freedom.

But though they had so nobly come out of the struggle against the tyranny of the emperor, I am sorry to say that the Italian cities did not thenceforth remain at peace. On the contrary, they were almost always at war with one another, and all of them sided with one or other of the two great parties which for a great many years divided Europe—the party of the Ghibelines and the party of the Guelphs. The quarrel between these two parties was whether the emperor of Germany or the pope of Rome was to have chief power. During the last centuries the power of the pope, or bishop of Rome, had been gradually becoming greater, and at last, in the eleventh century, a very able pope, Gregory VII., had declared that the emperor should not have the right of choosing the popes and appointing them, as he used to do, but that they should be quite independent of him. In the wars that followed

later, the party that supported the pope were called the Guelphs, while the emperor's party were called Ghibelines.

At the time that Dante was born, all the Italian cities took a side in this great quarrel, and Dante's native city, Florence, sided with the Guelphs, or the party favourable to the pope. Dante's own family were Guelphs, and seem to have been in a good position in the city. His great-grandfather had died fighting in the Holy Land at the time of the Second Crusade.

As a boy, Dante seems to have been well educated, and afterwards we hear of him studying at universities both in Italy and in France; but this is not certain. There is no doubt, however, that he was a distinguished scholar, and we are told, too, that he was skilled in music, and even in drawing. But scholar though he was, he could fight for his city when it was necessary, and we twice hear of him taking part in battle against the Ghibelines.

What was of greatest importance, however, in Dante's youth was his love for Beatrice—a love which had the greatest power over him throughout his life. He was only nine years of age, a shy, sensitive boy, with large, dreamy, dark eyes, and a head filled with strange fancies which he told no one, and *could* tell no one, when his parents took him to a party at a neighbour's house, where he saw Beatrice for the first time. She was the daughter of the neighbour (Folco Portinari) who was giving the party, and was a little girl of about Dante's own age, dressed in a simple childish frock of a crimson colour. No doubt to the other people present Beatrice was only a beautiful little girl and nothing more, but to the dreamy poetic boy she seemed like an angel—a vision of beauty and

Florence.

Dante's
boyhood.

His meeting
with
Beatrice.

goodness. From that night Beatrice became to the boy Dante what Rome was to Regulus, what knight-hood was to the noble young men of the Middle Ages—his *ideal*, what he must always try to live up to and be worthy of, even though he never hoped to win her.

In his first work, the *Vita Nuova* (New Life), he tells all about his love for Beatrice; and we see how the mere thought of her, which was almost
 The "*Vita Nuova*." always in his mind, helped to make him nobler and better. When he was still quite a young man, Beatrice died; and the grief of the young poet was very deep. But though she was dead, Beatrice still continued to be his ideal; he still constantly thought of her, and dreamed of her, and wrote of her, and looked forward to the time when it should please God "to suffer my soul to see the glory of my lady, of that blessed Beatrice." In his great poem, of which I am going to tell you, he describes how he meets the soul of Beatrice in Paradise, and how she is his guide over the heavenly regions.

But between the death of Beatrice and the writing of his great poem, many important events happened in the life of Dante. Florence was at that time much disturbed by a quarrel between two less important parties than the Guelphs and Ghibelines—the *Bianchi* and *Neri*, or Whites and Blacks—and Dante threw himself into public affairs, and did what he could to bring peace to the city, which he loved almost as Socrates loved Athens, or as Regulus loved Rome. He went on several embassies in behalf of the city, and for a while he was one of its chief rulers, and did his best to put an end to disputes and strife. But in the year 1301, when he had gone on

Dante
takes part
in public
affairs.

an embassy to Rome, a party who were unfavourable to him got into power, and they sentenced him to be exiled for ever from his native city. If he was found within its walls—so ran the sentence—he was to be burnt to death.

He is exiled,
1301.

So for the next twenty years of his life, till 1321 when he died, the great poet wandered about from place to place, taking refuge wherever he could, and trying by every means in his power to get back to his beloved Florence. But in vain: his great poem was written in exile, and in exile he died in 1321, at Ravenna.

His death,
1321.

During the twenty years of his homeless wanderings, although he often received much kindness both from friends and from strangers, who took him into their houses and gave him food and lodging, he felt to the full the misery of exile. He tells us himself how bitter to the banished man is the bread of others, and how hard it is to go up and down by other people's stairs. I think it was what he suffered himself as an exile, and what he saw other people suffering, that made him see what a great misfortune these divisions between parties were, that made him think what a glorious thing it would be for Italy if, instead of being divided between pope and emperor, Ghibeline and Guelph, it were to become one united nation governed by one king. But many centuries were to pass after Dante's time before this union could be realized. Still I think he helped to bring it about, or at least laid the foundation for it, though not by fighting and conquering as Charlemagne did in order to found *his* united empire, but by writing a book—his *Divina Comedia* (Divine Comedy). You will be surprised at my saying that Dante helped to unite Italy by writing a book; but I think

The "*Divina
Comedia.*"

I can explain what I mean. Before the time of Dante, every great book that was written in any country in Europe was written in Latin or Greek. During the Middle Ages, Latin was considered the proper language to write in; the languages spoken by the peoples of the different countries were thought by the few learned men who lived at the time to be much too rude and barbarous to be put into books. A few books had been translated into the language of the people by Alfred the Great of England and by other scholars; and there were some songs and ballads composed in the language of France, of Italy, and even of the Anglo-Saxons, before the time of Dante. But no great work had been written in any of the languages of modern Europe till Dante wrote his *Divina Comedia* in Italian. Now don't you think it would help to bring the people of the different cities of Italy more together, to make them feel more like one people, that here was a book written in the language which they all spoke and could all understand? The people of Genoa, and Pisa, and Milan, would not call Dante a Florentine, you may be sure; they would be eager to claim him as a countryman, and would call him *Italian*, as they would gradually come to call themselves, so losing sight in time of the smaller divisions, and learning to think of all Italian-speaking people as one nation. Have not the works of Shakespeare helped to make all English-speaking people one; and do not the songs of Burns make all Scotsmen friends and brothers? That is what I meant when I said that Dante had laid the foundation of the union of Italy.

The *Divine Comedy* is divided into three parts, called the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso*—Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. In the first part (the *Inferno*) the poet tells how he fell asleep, and how in a dream

he was led through the abode of eternal suffering, and beheld how sinners are punished in the next world for the sins which they have committed in this one. His guide through this dismal region is the Latin poet Virgil, who afterwards leads him through Purgatory, the place where the souls of better men are purified and made fit to enter Paradise. When they reach the entrance to Paradise, which is described in the third part of the poem, Virgil takes leave of Dante, for he cannot enter into the abode of the blessed—he was not a Christian in life—and afterwards Beatrice, the lady whom the poet had worshipped all his life, becomes his guide, and explains to him all the marvels of the New Jerusalem.

I cannot tell you here all the wonders that the poet sees in these worlds, unknown to us. Perhaps some day you will read for yourselves the first great poem written in any language of modern Europe, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante.



FROM DANTE'S TOMB, RAVENNA.

CHAPTER VII.

ROBERT BRUCE—THE INDEPENDENCE OF SCOTLAND.

WHILE Dante was wandering about, an exile from his native city, two countries of Europe—both of them lands “of the mountain and the flood”—were making a glorious struggle for their freedom against the tyranny and oppression of a much stronger power. These countries were Switzerland and Scotland.

The struggle against tyranny had already been begun in modern Europe, as we have seen, by the free cities of Italy; and it was carried on later in England, where the subjects of the tyrant King John (the brother of Richard Cœur de Lion) forced him to acknowledge their rights by signing Magna Carta.

Magna
Carta, 1215.

But I think it was in the mountain passes of Switzerland, and among the wilds and wastes of Scotland, that the noblest, bravest fight was fought for freedom.

Of the struggle in Switzerland I cannot tell you here, much though I should have liked to tell you the story of Tell, the great hero of the Swiss, and of the three brave men, with their thirty followers, who met by night in a dark, deep valley, and swore an oath to free their country from the tyrant; and of the glorious battle that was fought—and won!—by a band of Swiss peasants against the

trained army of the emperor of Germany—the battle of Morgarten, the “Marathon of Switzerland,” as it has been called. But I think it will be better to tell you more particularly how the people of Scotland fought for and won their independence.

For centuries the Scottish people had been governed by their own kings. During the twelfth century their king, William the Lion, had been taken prisoner by the king of England, Henry II., and had only been set free after swearing allegiance to Henry; but, as we have seen, he was afterwards freed from this oath of allegiance by Richard Cœur de Lion in return for a large sum of money. A century later, however, Scotland again came into the hands of the English king. This king was Edward I., the grand-nephew of Richard Cœur de Lion, and perhaps the greatest of all the Norman kings who had yet ruled in England. He had all the strength and courage of his great-uncle Richard, and like him he fought as a Crusader in the Holy Land; but he was a much wiser and abler statesman and general than Richard.

Now while Edward I. was reigning in England, the king of Scotland died, leaving no children. Two noblemen claimed the Scottish throne—John Baliol and Robert Bruce; and as the Scottish people could not decide themselves who had the better right to be king, they asked Edward to settle the dispute. Edward was willing enough to do so; but he demanded that he should be acknowledged as Lord Paramount over Scotland. This was granted; and then Edward marched into Scotland with a large army and

Battle of
Morgarten,
1315.

Scotland.

Edward I.
of England.

Claimants
of the
Scottish
throne.

Edward I.
chosen to
decide the
question.

took possession of all the strongest castles. When the claims to the Scottish throne of the two nobles were brought before him, he decided in favour of John Baliol, who was therefore crowned king, but was given to understand that he was only the vassal or subject of England.

The Scottish nobles, however, could not bear the humiliating position of being subject to England, and they entered into a treaty with the king of France against Edward. Edward got together a large army, and having entered Scotland, carried everything before him. John Baliol appeared before him, and humbly asked for pardon, which was granted only on condition of the crown of Scotland being resigned into Edward's hands. Edward then sent the crown, with the sceptre, and the stone chair on which the ancient kings of Scotland had been crowned, to Westminster Abbey; and he forced the chief Scottish nobles to swear allegiance to him. Thus Scotland became part of Edward's kingdom.

But the Scots would not submit to English rule: no sooner was Edward out of the country than they rose in rebellion and attacked the English garrisons which he had left in the castles. At first they could not venture on any open attack on the English; but at length they found an able leader in Sir William Wallace, a Scottish hero no less celebrated than Robert Bruce. Under the leadership of this brave man they gradually increased in strength and daring, and at last they were able to meet and overcome the English forces at Stirling. I cannot tell you here all the brave deeds of Wallace—all that he did and all that he tried to do for

**Decides in
favour of
Baliol.**

**Revolt of
the Scots
against Ed-
ward.**

**Edward con-
quers Scot-
land.**

**Sir William
Wallace.**

**Battle of
Stirling,
1297.**

Scotland—as it is the portrait of Bruce that I am to give you now. In the end, after all his glorious struggles for the freedom of his country, he fell into the hands of the English by the treachery of a Scotsman, and was put to death as a traitor in 1305.

Death of
Wallace,
1305.

It was after the death of Wallace that Bruce came to the front in Scotland. He was the son of the Earl of Carrick, and grandson of Baliol's rival for the Scottish throne. As a young man, he did not show the great strength of character and decision of purpose that afterwards appeared in him. We hear of him at one time siding with Wallace, and at another swearing allegiance to Edward. But after the death of Wallace, when the hearts of all true Scotsmen were full of indignation against his destroyer, Edward of England, Bruce seems to have thought that the time had come to take possession of the throne which by right belonged to him, and to free his country from its English conquerors.

Robert
Bruce.

At that time Baliol was in prison, and the only other claimant of the Scottish crown besides Bruce himself was the Earl of Badenoch, generally called the Red Comyn. Bruce offered to give this man the estates which he had inherited from his father, in return for which Comyn was to help Bruce to gain possession of the throne. Comyn consented to this proposal; but Bruce afterwards discovered that he had told the English king what had been arranged, and had even advised him to put Bruce to death. Indignant at his treachery, Bruce hastened to Dumfries, where Comyn was staying; and a meeting took place between the two in the chapel belonging to the convent of the Minorite Friars. Bruce, with fierce

Comyn's
treachery.

anger and indignation, accused Comyn of treachery. Comyn retorted angrily, "You lie!" Overwrought with excitement at the discovery he had made, and with fatigue from his long rapid journey (for he was in London when he first heard of Comyn's treachery), Bruce could not restrain himself when he heard these

words. A sudden fury seized him, and before
The murder
of Comyn. he knew what he was doing he had drawn
 his dagger, and the Red Comyn was lying
 bathed in a pool of blood at his feet. I think he was
 horror-struck at what he had done almost as soon as
 he had done it: when he appeared at the porch of the
 church where a few friends were waiting for him, he
 was pale and scared and haggard looking. "I doubt
 I have slain the Comyn!" he said, in a shamed, awe-
 stricken tone, when his friends, alarmed at his appear-
 ance, asked what was the matter. "You doubt it?"
 replied Kirkpatrick, who seems to have been a regular
 pattern of the rude, savage Scottish noble of the time—
 "you doubt it? I mak siccar" (I'll make sure); and
 he entered the church and killed the Comyn, who was
 lying wounded on the steps of the altar.

This story of the murder of the Comyn has left a
 terrible blot on the character of Bruce. I have told it
 to you because I must try to give you as true a por-
 trait as possible, and it would not be true if I were to
 tell you only what is good, and nothing that is bad.
 After this you can imagine what a very dangerous
 position Bruce was in, and how nearly every one was
 against him. All the friends and relatives of the Comyn
 (and he belonged to a large and powerful family) were
 his deadly enemies; all clergymen and church people
 were deeply indignant against him for having profaned
 the church by committing a murder in it; and Edward I.

was, of course, furious at being openly defied. There was nothing left for Bruce to do but to try to gather a few brave followers round him, and fight his way to freedom and the throne of Scotland. That was what he did. In March 1306, surrounded by a small band of Scottish nobles, he was crowned at Scone, near Perth, by the Countess of Fife, she taking the place of her husband, who, according to custom, ought to have performed the ceremony, but who was then on the side of Edward; while a little golden circlet, taken from the image of some saint, took the place of the Scottish crown, then in Westminster.

Bruce
crowned,
1306.

When Edward heard what had taken place in Scotland, he took a solemn oath to march into the country and punish the Scots for what he called their treachery; and he got together a large army, and accompanied by his son, afterwards Edward II., he immediately began his march. Meantime, Bruce and his few followers were suffering the greatest hardships. Outcasts and exiles, with neither home nor country, they wandered about the wilds of Perthshire, accompanied by their wives and sisters, who, like their husbands and brothers, had no place of safety where they could take shelter. Often they had nothing to eat but the roots and wild berries which they could gather; at other times they would perhaps catch some fish or game. It is curious to think that while the Italian Dante was learning in exile how bitter was the bread of the stranger, in Scotland Bruce was forgetting the taste of bread altogether.

During this time, Bruce often amazed his companions by his wonderful strength and courage; and there are stories told of his feats of daring which I have not space to tell you here. Nor was it only by his courage in fight that he surprised and delighted his followers; he

showed equal courage and strength in endurance. Often when they were worn out and dejected with want and fatigue and suffering, he would cheer and inspirit them by telling them stirring tales which he had read of brave knights who had gone through great hardships and trials, but had conquered in the end.

The first winter after his coronation Bruce and his followers spent in Ireland, after having sent their wives and sisters, under the escort of Bruce's youngest brother Nigel, to Kildrummie. That castle was stormed by the English, who hanged the brave young Nigel and threw the women into prison. In the following spring, Bruce and his companions landed on the coast of Carrick, his family estate, attacked the village of Turnberry at night, killed the English soldiers who were quartered there, and carried off several horses and a quantity of silver plate, which afterwards helped to buy him soldiers. This was the first stroke of luck that Bruce had as yet had; but his troubles were by no means over. Two of his brothers, who had been gathering an army for him in Ireland, were taken by the English and brought before Edward, who instantly had them put to death. Bruce and his few followers were again obliged to wander about in concealment, this time in Carrick, pursued by the enemy; and many were the hairbreadth escapes of the exile king and his friends from the hands of the enemy, and many were the wonderful adventures they experienced—adventures as romantic as those of any knight-errant of fiction. One night when Bruce and a few wearied followers had got separated from the rest of his men, they suddenly heard through the darkness the deep bark of a bloodhound. They listened, and they heard it again and again, each time sounding nearer than the time before. Then they knew that the enemy

were on their track, and would soon overtake them. Bruce at once sent two men to bring up the rest of his followers; the others who were with him he posted behind a small stream, while he himself took his place alone at the ford, which only one man could cross at a time. Silently he waited in the darkness, a solitary, motionless, massive figure, prepared to meet whatever was in store for him. Louder and louder became the yells of the bloodhound, nearer and nearer came the enemy—two hundred men strong. Soon the first man plunged with a splash into the stream. But he never reached the other side: Bruce's spear pierced his body, and it fell lifeless into the water. So it befell the second, the third, and even the fourth. Then Bruce's followers came up, and by their sudden onset and their shouts frightened the enemy and put them to flight.

That is only one of the many wonderful feats of strength and courage performed by Bruce. I should like to tell you of others; but I must go on to relate the more important events of his life. After more than a year of the life of a mere outcast, who was hunted like a wild beast, he had managed to gather round him more followers; and when the English believed that he was dead, or his little band dispersed, he made two sudden attacks on their outposts. In 1307, he was able to meet the Earl of Pembroke in open battle at Loudon Hill, when the English were totally defeated.

Loudon Hill,
1307.

Shortly after this battle, the best event took place that could have happened for the cause of Bruce: the brave, able Edward I. died on his march almost within sight of Scotland, after making his son and his chief barons swear that they would carry his bones before them into Scotland, and

Death of
Edward I.

keep them unburied until that country should be conquered.

I cannot tell you here of all the successes gained by Bruce, while Edward II., forgetful of his oath to his father, was enjoying himself in London. In 1310, the English king did indeed lead three invading armies into Scotland; but they effected nothing, as the Scots simply laid waste the country before them, and then retreated northwards, leaving the English to advance if they liked into a country where there was nothing for them to eat. At last all the strong castles in Scotland which had been taken by Edward I. were in the hands of Bruce, except the castle of Stirling, which the English governor had promised to give up to the Scots at midsummer of the year 1314, if an English army did not come to his help before that time.

Before the day fixed on for the surrender of the castle, Edward II. had assembled an enormous army, and was advancing towards Stirling. But Bruce was prepared for him: when on the 23rd of June the English arrived within sight of Stirling, they found the small Scottish army drawn up in readiness for battle on the field of Bannockburn. I could fill pages if I were to attempt to describe to you the fight that took place there the following day, or to tell you one-half of the stories in connection with it that are cherished in the proud hearts of the Scots: how carefully and prudently Bruce had made his preparations for the battle (for with all his courage, and no man ever had more, he had the caution of his countrymen); how the Scots spent the night before the fight in prayer and watching, while the English feasted and revelled; how nobly Edward Bruce, the brother of the

Edward II.
invades
Scotland,
1310.

Battle of
Bannock-
burn, 1314.

king, and the young Randolph his nephew, with the good Sir James Douglas and others of the Scottish nobles, bore themselves in the fight; how the English cavalry were powerless against the close-formed squares of the Scottish foot; and how the flower of the English archers went down before the impetuous charge of Bruce's small body of horse. After the battle, when the English king and the remains of his army were fleeing from the country, thirty thousand English were found dead on the field, and the prisoners were so many that their ransoms made Scotland rich in one day. We are told that the loss of this battle was such a blow to English pride that afterwards a hundred English would not be ashamed to flee from four Scottish soldiers!

The next thirteen or fourteen years of Bruce's life are still the story of fights and conquests on the part of the Scots; for England had not yet acknowledged their independence. At length, in 1328, when Edward II. had died, and his son Edward III. was still a boy of some fourteen or fifteen years, a peace was concluded between the two countries, and the freedom of Scotland was acknowledged by the English. After that, Bruce, who was now worn out and feeble in body from the hardships he had undergone, retired to his palace of Cardross, where he led a quiet, peaceful life, employing his leisure time in improving his grounds and gardens, followed by his pet, a tame lion. Here he died in 1329.

Peace between England and Scotland, 1328.

Death of Bruce, 1329.

Before he died, he gave a last charge to his faithful follower Sir James Douglas, which the other with sobs promised to fulfil. It had been a dream of Bruce's that when his country should be at peace, he would go to Palestine to fight against the infidel. Now he had to

give up this dream; but he begged his trusty friend and follower, that when he was no more, Douglas would take his heart to the Holy Land and bury it there. When Sir James gave his promise, Bruce thanked him. "For now," he said, "I shall die more in ease of my mind, sith I know that the most worthy and sufficient knight of my realm shall achieve for me that which I could never attain unto."

So in the following spring Douglas set out to fulfil his promise to the king, carrying with him the heart of Bruce enclosed in a casket of silver. But he never reached Palestine: when he was in Holland on his way there, he heard that the Christian king of Castile in Spain was at war with the Moorish sultan of Granada; and thinking that this would be a noble cause in which to fight, he made his way to the south of Spain, where the war was going on. While pursuing the Moors in battle, he and his followers got separated from the Christian army, and found themselves surrounded by the Moorish army. Taking the silver casket from his neck, to which he wore it fastened, he flung it into the midst of the enemy, exclaiming, "Forward, brave heart, as thou wert wont! Douglas will follow thee or die!" Then he dashed into the thickest of the enemy's ranks, and fell covered with wounds.

The next day he was found lying dead on the field beside the heart of his master, which he had reached through the midst of the foe. Thus perished one of Scotland's bravest heroes.

CHAPTER VIII.

JOAN OF ARC—THE END OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.

THERE is not in all history a more wonderful story than that of Joan, or Jeanne, d'Arc, the Maid of Orleans. When we who are living now read that a young girl, ignorant and untaught, the daughter of a humble tiller of the soil in a lowly village of France, actually was able to free her country from a foreign invader, we feel it impossible to believe it. And yet there is no doubt that it is true.

Ever since the time of Edward III. of England, who began to reign when Bruce was still alive, till the days when Joan of Arc lived, there had been war between the countries of England and France. The Hundred Years' War. Though there was not constant fighting going on during all these hundred years, yet there never was a lasting peace between the two countries, so the war has been called the Hundred Years' War. It was our Edward III. who began it, and the Edward III. begins the war. Maid of Orleans put an end to it. Edward III. had laid claim to the crown of France, to which he had a right through his mother Isabella, the daughter of the king of France. As his right was not acknowledged by the French people, he entered France with an army; and there, against a much larger Battle of Crécy, 1346. French one, he gained the battle of Crécy—

a battle no less glorious than that which his father, Edward II., had lost against the Scots thirty years before at Bannockburn. The battle of Crécy is indeed one of the greatest glories of England. It was on the field of Crécy that Edward's son, the Black Prince, a youth of sixteen, so nobly won his spurs. Ten years later, this same prince, who is one of the favourite heroes of English history, won another splendid victory for his country over France at Poitiers, where he took the French king prisoner. I daresay you have heard how respectfully and courteously the victorious young prince treated his royal prisoner—how he waited upon him at supper the evening after the battle; and how, when the English army entered London in triumph, the French king was mounted on a splendid white horse, with the richest harness, while the young prince, his conqueror, rode at his side on a small black pony. After that there was a treaty of peace drawn up between France and England; but the peace did not last long. Every now and then war would break out between the two countries, and the kings of England got into the habit of considering themselves rightfully kings of France as well.

About sixty years after the battle of Poitiers, Henry V., who was reigning in England at that time, and who was one of the ablest and bravest of all the English kings, made up his mind to go to France and win the crown which he thought by right belonged to him. He landed near the town of Harfleur, which he took after a siege of five weeks. But meantime disease had broken out among his soldiers; and they suffered too from a scarcity of food, so that the army was very much weakened. Henry was strongly advised to turn back; but instead of doing so he boldly marched

forward, and with his little army, weakened and worn out as it was, he met the forces of the French, four times the strength of his own, on the plain of Agincourt—met them, and put them to flight! Five years later, when the English had made conquest after conquest in France, a treaty was drawn up between the two countries by which it was agreed that, after the death of the present king, Henry V. of England should be king of France. But only two years after this treaty was signed, Henry died; and two months after him died the king of France. Henry VI., then a mere infant, became king of England and of France.

Battle of
Agincourt,
1415.

Treaty of
Troyes, 1420.

Death of
Henry V.

At that time Joan of Arc was a child of ten or eleven years. She had been born three or four years before the battle of Agincourt. She was the daughter of a humble peasant who tilled his own little bit of land in the small village of Domrémy. There Joan was born and brought up, or rather *grew* up, for she did not get much education. We are told that she never learned to read or write; but her mother had taught her to say her prayers, to spin, and to sew, and her days were spent in these occupations. Well and diligently she fulfilled these humble tasks. Above the other maidens of the village she was distinguished for her diligence, her strength, and her energy. By-and-by, as she grew up, she became silent and dreamy, and loved to steal away from her companions to the little church, and kneel in prayer alone. And often strange dreams came to her as she tended the flocks in the silent, lonely fields, or sat and spun before the cottage door. For her mind was strong and active; and while her busy fingers

Joan of
Arc.

Her dreams
and
visions.

worked, it could not be idle, but must be working too. And at times she heard, or seemed to hear, voices in her ears that bade her be diligent in work and prayer, for that God had a great work appointed for her to do. So gradually it came to pass that this untaught, ignorant peasant-girl grew to believe that she was chosen by God to fulfil some special work; and the belief strengthened daily with her strength. But at first she did not know *what* work she was set apart to do: she waited till she should learn. Meantime, she told her thoughts and dreams to no one; indeed, there was no one to whom she could tell them, no one who would have understood.

So the days passed on, till at length, when she was barely seventeen, her dreams took shape, her mission became plain to her: she was to free France from the invading English, and set the dauphin, the late king's son, upon the throne! That was no small feat for an ignorant maiden of sixteen even to dream of doing. I do not know when or how it first became clear to her that this was her appointed mission. No doubt she had often from her earliest years heard of all the suffering that the long, cruel war had brought upon her beloved country—of villages destroyed by flames, of smiling fields laid waste, of churches plundered by the enemy, of deaths by sword in battle, by famine in siege; and often her warm young heart had swelled with indignant grief and shame for the calamities of France. Then perhaps, some winter evening as she sat beside the fire in the homely little cottage, her fingers busy with her spinning-wheel, and her mind full of her own strange thoughts, she heard the legend of the village of Domrémy from the lips of some old crone gossiping with her mother.

Centuries before, as people said, the old magician Merlin—the same who had reared and taught King Arthur of England—had foretold that France would fall by a woman and would be saved by a woman; and the woman who should save France, so ran the legend of Domrémy, should come out of Domrémy wood. Can you not fancy how Joan, with her mind full of the thought of her own exalted destiny, would listen to that tale; how her thread would break short suddenly and her wheel stand still, as there leaped into her mind the thought, “I am that woman—I, Joan of Arc!”

The legend
of Dom-
rémy.

When it became clear to her what her mission was, she spoke at last to her family, and told them she must set out to deliver France from the enemy, and place the crown upon the dauphin’s head. At first they almost laughed at her; but when they looked into her melancholy, earnest eyes, they saw it was no laughing matter. Then they became alarmed: they feared that she had lost her reason, or that she was “possessed” by some evil spirit. The good mother who had taught her her prayers as a little child reasoned with her—and prayed for her too, I am sure. Perhaps she even bought some candles with her hard-won earnings to place upon the altar of the little church; for she was a simple, pious Roman Catholic. But it was all in vain. Joan held to her purpose; and when her parents would not listen to her, she went to her uncle, who lived near, and pleaded with him so earnestly to take her to the owner of the castle near that at last he consented.

Joan
tells her
parents
of her
purpose.

So Joan was brought before the great man of the castle, the seigneur of Baudricourt, and told him her strange tale. At first he, like the others, treated her

as one who had lost her reason ; but there was something in the way she spoke, and pleaded her cause, something in the deeply-earnest look of her face, which persuaded him almost against himself to give her a horse and an escort of two or three men. So she set out ; and after many adventures by the way, she reached Chinon, where the dauphin was, and begged to be brought into his presence.

Joan sets
out to go
to the
dauphin.

Well, the dauphin thought to try her, to see if she really had unusual powers.. So he disguised himself, and placed himself among his courtiers like one of themselves ; and then the maiden was admitted. She stood a moment at the threshold looking around her ; but as soon as her eye fell upon the dauphin, without an instant's hesitation she moved forward and kneeled before him, addressing him as king, and begging him to give her an army to lead against the English ; for that it had been revealed to her that she, and none but she, should place the crown of France upon his head. At first the dauphin treated her request as mere madness ; but at length she had her way, and soon set out with a small army for the town of Orleans, which was at that time besieged by the English. She had now attired herself in armour ; and at her side she wore an ancient sword, which, it is said, she had been told in a vision was buried in the Church of St. Catherine, and which had been found exactly where she had said it would be. In her hand she carried a banner which she had herself embroidered, surrounded with a wreath of lilies, and with the face of God looking down from the clouds upon the earth worked in the centre of one side.

When she reached Orleans, the French inside the town were suffering the greatest hardships, and were almost

ready to surrender to the English ; but when it became known that Joan had arrived, the greatest terror fell upon the English soldiers, for they believed she was bewitched ; and she was able to make her way with her little army through the lines of the enemy into the town. You can imagine how eagerly the poor French within the walls welcomed the brave maiden who had come to save them at the peril of her own life ! Once within the town, she attacked the English with such force that they were at last obliged to retire. So by her great courage and her faith in God this ignorant, humble peasant-maiden was able to save the good town of Orleans for her country, and to drive away the enemy. After that she gained other victories—one important one in particular at Patay, which I can only mention here ; and she was present when, at her entreaties, the Dauphin Charles ventured to have himself crowned king of France in the town of Rheims. She stood at his side, holding her sacred banner unfurled in her hand.

Joan raises
the siege of
Orleans,
1429.

Charles is
crowned at
Rheims.

When this had taken place, the maid felt that her work was done ; and she desired to go to her humble home, and return to her old duties of tending the flocks and spinning and sewing ; but the king refused to let her go as yet. After this she was less successful than she had been, for she did not fight with her old spirit and her old faith, knowing as she did that her hour had passed ; and at last she fell into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, who was fighting on the side of the English, to whom the brave maiden, the saviour of her country, was sold by her countrymen.

Joan is sold
to the
English.

I wish I could tell you that our countrymen the

English behaved more nobly to the brave girl than her own had done. But, alas! I cannot. They kept her prisoner, made her undergo a long trial as a witch, and finally condemned her to death. And Charles—the dauphin as he had been, the king as she had made him—did nothing to save her, nothing at all. I wonder that, every time he heard his title spoken—the title which the Maid of Orleans had given her life to win for him—it did not cut him to the heart like a knife.

But Joan, dragging out the weary days of her imprisonment in the hands of the English, enduring insult and hardship of every description, did not suspect the dauphin, whom she had crowned king of France, of ingratitude and cowardice such as she herself was utterly incapable of. Day by day she waited, hopefully, undoubtingly, for the coming of her countrymen to release her—waited to the end. But she waited in vain.

On the 30th of May 1431, she was led out to the market-place of Rouen, the town where she had been imprisoned, and there she was burned to death. To the last she showed the greatest courage and firmness. While the flames were leaping up around her, she called out again and again for a crucifix; and a rough soldier, touched by her cries, carved out of a piece of wood a rude cross, which he handed to her, and which she pressed to her lips and her heart.

There is a beautiful story told by the unlearned people of France that when all was over, when all that was left on earth of the noble, heroic Maid of Orleans was a small heap of smouldering ashes, a beautiful white dove, the bird of peace, rose up from out the smoking pile, and winged its way upwards toward the

sky. The meaning of the story at least is true, if not the story itself: out of the ashes of Joan of Arc arose the dove Peace, and spread its protecting wings over the fair land of France. Joan's heroic acts had awoke the slumbering spirit of the French: they arose and drove the invader from the land. The Hundred Years' War was ended by the heroism of a simple peasant-maiden.



JOAN OF ARC.

CHAPTER IX.

COLUMBUS—THE DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD.

ONLY five years after Joan of Arc was burned at Rouen, through the ignorant superstition of the English, there was born a man who did much to enlighten men's ignorance and to widen their minds. That man was Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America.

For centuries men had gone on living in the belief that they knew the world they lived in, and that the world they knew of was all. You can fancy their amazement when the news burst upon them that far away in the west there lay another world, as vast as that already known to them; you can fancy how ignorant it must have made them feel to think that that great world had been lying there all these centuries, while they knew nothing of it! Not the Greeks, with all their learning, not the Romans, who boasted that their empire stretched over the world, had ever dreamed of the world of the West—of America. The Greeks and the Romans, indeed, with all their learning and skill and power, had but vague notions of geography. Alexander the Great, by his conquests in Asia, did a great deal to make men know more about other countries besides their own; but it was not till after the time of Columbus that the true nature of this earth of ours, and the position of

the different continents upon it, were clearly understood.

Even before Columbus was born, the people of Europe had begun to take more interest than they used to do in the discovery of new lands by sea. I have told you how it is said that those wild, sea-roving Northmen had reached the shores of America centuries before the time of Columbus; but if they had, the other people of Europe had no history of their discovery—at most there was only some vague story that land had been reached westwards by some Norse sea-rovers. Early in the fifteenth century (the century of Joan of Arc and The of Columbus), the people of Portugal, which, Portuguese as you will see from your map, is the western discoveries. part of the most westerly peninsula of Europe, had begun to show a spirit of enterprise and discovery. Expeditions were sent out by them to endeavour to find a passage by the south of Africa to India, and they discovered the islands of Madeira and the Azores, and settled on the west coast of Africa.

No doubt stories of what the Portuguese had done and were doing reached the ears of the boy Columbus, and helped to stir up the spirit of inquiry and discovery that was born in him. His father was a Birth of well-to-do citizen of Genoa, a town in the Columbus, north of Italy, where he carried on the trade 1436. of a wool-comber, and where his great son Christopher was born in 1436.

Christopher was taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and drawing as a boy; and he soon showed a keen interest in geography and a burning desire to go to sea. His father, seeing what his bent His was, sent him to the university of Pavia, boyhood. where he was taught geometry, astronomy, and naviga-

tion. But he was not long at the university. He was little more than a boy when he went to sea, on which he passed the following years of his life, taking part in many an expedition and many a small sea-fight.

He sets out
to sea.

Life at sea in those days was a very different thing from what it is now. Men had not yet learned either to make or to manage ships as they do in our days; and they could not venture out on the wide ocean with their imperfect vessels and their ignorance of navigation. They looked upon the broad Atlantic, that stretched away to the west from the shores of Spain and Portugal, with a kind of superstitious awe; and no mariner would have thought of launching himself upon what appeared an endless stretch of waters. The Portuguese, indeed, had lately sailed the Atlantic; but they had not attempted to cross it—only to coast Africa with the hope of finding, to the south of that continent, a passage by which they could reach India. The ships of those days generally confined themselves to the narrow seas—the Mediterranean, the North Sea, etc. In these seas, fights would often take place between vessels belonging to different countries, or even to different noblemen, who often fitted out small fleets to attack by sea some land of which they wanted to take possession, or to which they laid claim. Columbus took part in several expeditions of this sort; and in particular he frequently attacked the vessels of the “infidel” Turks, which at that time it was considered almost a pious thing to do, just as it was to take part in a crusade. In a fight with some Venetian ships off the coast of Portugal, not far from Lisbon, his vessel was set on fire, and Columbus and his crew leaped into the sea—Columbus laying hold of an oar, by the help of which, as he

was a good swimmer, he managed to make his way to land.

It was in 1470 that Columbus, then a man of about thirty-four, went to Portugal, to which many men of learning, or of adventurous spirit, ^{He goes to Portugal.} were at that time drawn by the stories of the discoveries made by the people. In Lisbon, Columbus married the niece of one of the most ^{He marries.} distinguished of the Portuguese navigators, who had died not long before. Most probably his wife brought with her to her new home many tales of adventure; and seeing that her husband was much interested in all that concerned discoveries by sea, she would often relate them to him; and thus perhaps she gave him fresh stimulus. Meanwhile Columbus pored over every map, and chart, and writing of any sort connected with geography and navigation that he could lay his hands on. Sometimes he went expeditions with the Portuguese to Africa; at other times he supported his family by making maps and plans. Meantime his great project had arisen in his mind, and was steadily growing in strength—to sail out westwards over the apparently endless stretch of the Atlantic, with the hope of reaching land.

It was in the year 1474, four years after coming to Lisbon, that, so far as we know, he first told any one of his project, and of the reasons which had ^{His project.} led him to think of it. Curiously enough, though Columbus succeeded in carrying out one of the greatest discoveries that have ever been made, his faith that he should succeed was based upon a blunder. He believed that the Earth was round, as we know it to be, and that consequently it was possible to sail round it; but he believed that it was very much smaller than it

actually is ; and the land he expected to reach by sailing westward was not an unknown continent, but the continent of Asia, which he thought stretched much further eastwards than it does. That there was land to the west of the Atlantic he felt sure from all he had heard. He had learned that trunks of trees had been washed up on the shores of the Azores which were unlike any that grew there, and that pieces of wood had been picked up in the Atlantic which were evidently carved with human hands, but not with iron tools.

When he had reached his conclusion that Asia could be reached by sailing west across the Atlantic, the idea became fixed in his mind, and he became filled with a solemn, almost religious belief, that he was appointed by Providence to make the voyage of discovery, just as Joan of Arc had believed that it was her divine mission to place the crown of France on the head of the dauphin. But it was impossible to carry out, or even to

He makes a
proposal to
the king of
Portugal.

attempt, such a project as Columbus dreamed of without money to get ships and men and provisions. Columbus applied to the king of Portugal, who, however, refused to fit out an

expedition for him. I am ashamed to tell you that the king was contemptible enough to permit a ship to be privately sent off on the route which Columbus had laid down. That ship, however, never got very far. The pilots took fright when they saw the boundless waters

He leaves
Portugal,
1484.

of the Atlantic stretching before them, and returned to Lisbon. Columbus, indignant at this base cunning, immediately left Portugal, taking with him his son, who was still a boy. His wife had been dead some time.

From Portugal he went to Spain, in order to seek help from King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who at that

time ruled over Christian Spain. The Moors, against whom the Cid had fought four centuries before, were still reigning in the south part of Spain. the country, which was called Granada. When Columbus arrived in Spain, all the country was taken up with a great war which was going on between the Christian monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, and the Moorish king of Granada; and Columbus found it almost impossible to get any one to listen to his scheme. He waited from week to week, from month to month, in poverty and suspense, always hoping to get audience with the king and queen, and to be told that they were willing to grant him what he wanted. But the great war entirely took up the thoughts of the monarchs, and they had no attention to spare for the future discoverer of America.

It was not till seven years after his coming to Spain—not till he had followed the court about from place to place in the march against the Moors, even taking part himself in the war and distinguishing himself by his courage; not till he had endured great poverty, the ridicule of his fellow-men, and almost every form of hardship—not till then did he at last obtain the fulfilment of his hopes. In the end of the year 1491, he was summoned to the presence of Queen Isabella, who was at that time in the camp of the Christian army before the walls of Granada, the capital of the Moorish kings of Spain. Columbus was in time to witness the proudest sight which the Christians of Spain had ever beheld—the submission of the last of the Moorish kings to his Christian conquerors. He saw all the glitter and splendour of the Spanish army spread out before him, and he heard the shouts of triumph and the hymns of

Final conquest of the Moors in Spain, 1492.

thanksgiving that rose to the skies as the last of the Moorish kings came forth from his magnificent palace of the Alhambra and delivered up its keys to Ferdinand and Isabella. It was certainly the proudest moment in the history of Spain: thenceforth that country was a Christian kingdom, ruled by Christian monarchs. It is interesting to think of Columbus being present on that great occasion—Columbus, who was himself so soon to place another jewel in the crown of Spain.

At last, after his long years of waiting and suing, after all his hopes and fears and anxieties, Columbus, then a man of fifty-six, obtained the wish of his life: he set sail, on the 3rd August 1492, with a small fleet of three vessels, of which, after some opposition, he had been named admiral. In his interview with Queen Isabella at Granada, he succeeded in arousing her interest in his proposed discovery, and she declared that she was ready to pledge her jewels to raise the necessary money, even though the king were unfavourable to the expedition. Even after the consent of both monarchs had been obtained, it was long before sailors could be got to go on board the vessels. They looked upon the proposal to sail across the Atlantic with a kind of superstitious horror. When at last Columbus had succeeded in getting crews for his three vessels—when they had put out into the open sea, when the last speck of land had vanished from their longing backward gaze, and only the wide waters of the mysterious unknown ocean stretched before and behind them as far as eye could see—then the men burst into tears, as they thought of the country they had left behind them, and the homes and friends they believed they should never see again.

It was on the 8th of October—more than two months

after the little fleet had set out from Spain—that land was first sighted. During these two months the anxieties and trouble which Columbus had to bear must have been terrible. As day after day and week after week passed by, and still there was no sight of land, the discontent of the crew increased to almost open mutiny and rebellion against their admiral, and there were even whispered among the men proposals to put him quietly out of the way and then to turn back. Columbus knew all this; but he never for a moment wavered in his course—his faith in his own destiny never left him. In his management of the men he showed firmness, kindness, and tact, doing everything in his power to awaken their interest and faith in the strange land to which he was leading them, and offering a large reward to the man who should first see land. At first this offer had but little effect, for the men did not believe they should ever see land at all; but by-and-by signs that land was not very far away began to reach them: little birds came singing about the ship, and a branch of thorn with red berries on it, as well as various weeds, were seen floating towards the vessels. Then, from being rebellious and dejected, the men became eager and excited; they kept a bright look-out, and many were the false alarms of land ahead.

First sight
of land.

On the evening of October 7th, when the sailors had sung their vesper hymn, Columbus spoke to them very earnestly and solemnly of the goodness of God in having brought them in safety so far, and having granted them fair weather; then he told them that he believed they should that night reach land. Not many hours after, about ten o'clock, as he was eagerly scanning the darkness before him, he saw a light in the distance,

which seemed to move about, to appear and disappear again as if carried by some one along a shore. He called two men and bade them look, and both declared they saw the light. Then, though no one else thought anything of it, Columbus believed they had reached land, and that the land was inhabited. At two in the morning a gun from one of the other ships proved that he was right: land had been seen. Can you imagine the wild excitement of the sailors, the deep, intense eagerness, the awed solemnity and pious thankfulness of the admiral, as they waited with furled sails for the morning light?

When the sun rose on the 8th of October, there stretched before the eager eyes of Columbus and his men, a beautiful island covered with verdure and trees. It was one of the Bahama Islands, which we now know are situated off the east coast of Central America, and which are part of the British empire; but Columbus did not know of the existence of America, and he believed that the island lay off the east of Asia. I cannot attempt to describe to you the feelings of the great discoverer when he first set foot on the new-found land. As soon as he landed, he threw himself on his knees and kissed the sand, thanking God for his kindness in permitting him to reach this unknown country. He then unfurled the Spanish flag, and took possession of the island in the names of Ferdinand and Isabella. Meantime a group of the natives had gathered on the shore, and were gazing with awe-struck wonder at the ships and at the new arrivals, with their strange clothes and weapons. In their ignorance and simplicity, they believed that Columbus and his followers were gods who had dropped from the skies. They were an innocent, harmless race

Columbus
lands on
one of the
Bahama
Islands.

of people, who treated the Spaniards with confidence and kindness.

After discovering several other islands, amongst them the island of Hayti or Hispaniola, as Columbus called it, he returned homewards in order to report to the king and queen of Spain his wonderful discovery. On the voyage they experienced a terrible storm, and almost despaired of ever seeing land again; but at last they arrived safely in Spain on the 15th March 1493, not much more than seven months after they had started. Very different was the reception of Columbus now from what it had been when he first arrived in Spain an unknown stranger! Church bells were rung, shops were closed, people rushed in crowds to welcome the returned discoverers. The journey of Columbus from Palos, where he landed, to Barcelona, where the king and queen were at the time, was like a royal progress.

Returns
home,
1493.

Six months later, he started again for the new-found country, with a fleet of seventeen vessels filled with men eager for the gold and riches which they believed that country contained. On Columbus himself every honour had been conferred; and as he sailed away from Cadiz, admiral of Spain and viceroy of the newly-discovered land, no one would ever have imagined that in a few years he was to return a prisoner loaded with chains.

His second
voyage.

Yet so it was. In Hispaniola, which Columbus fixed upon as the seat of his new colony, and where he built a town, complaints and discontent soon broke out among the settlers when they found that it was not possible to become wealthy in a moment by the discovery of piles of gold. Many of the more ambitious of the colonists, too, looked with

Discontent
of the
colonists.

envy and spite upon the viceroy, who was not a Spaniard like themselves. Gradually reports unfavourable to Columbus reached the ears of the king and queen. Discontented colonists returned to Spain spreading false stories of the cruelty and severity of the new viceroy, and accusing him of having made false statements to the king and queen as to the condition of the newly-found country. At last the Spanish monarchs resolved to send a nobleman to Hispaniola to inquire into the conduct of Columbus and to take his place as viceroy.

When this commissioner arrived at San Domingo, a fort which Columbus had built on the coast of Hayti, and which has now grown into a town, Columbus was absent on an exploring expedition. All sorts of reports and slanders against him were brought by the discontented settlers to the new arrival. Bobadilla—that was the name of the royal commissioner—believed, or pretended to believe, them. He took possession of the house of Columbus and all that was in it, and distributed his goods amongst men to whom arrears of pay were owing. Then, having heard some rumours that Columbus intended to resist him with the help of some native chiefs, as soon as the great discoverer returned from his expedition he ordered him to be handcuffed and conveyed home to Spain.

So, in the year 1500, Columbus arrived in Spain loaded with chains, and quite broken down with all he had gone through—toil and hardship, anxiety and grief. On his arrival, he wrote a long letter to a friend at the court of the queen, relating all he had done and all he had suffered. When this letter was read to Queen Isabella, she was full of indignation, and ordered that

Columbus should at once be set free and brought into her presence ; and it is said that when he appeared before her, and she read the story of his sufferings in his haggard face and sunken eyes, she shed tears of sorrow.

Once more, in the year 1502, Columbus set out on a voyage to the West—the voyage which was to be his last. This time his intention was to sail right round the world, reaching India from the west, and thence returning, laden with the riches of that country, by the route which the Portuguese had discovered round the Cape of Good Hope. He expected to find a strait, where the Isthmus of Darien is situated in Central America, which would lead from the Atlantic into the Indian Ocean. But the expedition proved a failure ; and in 1504 he returned for the last time to Spain, utterly worn out with sickness and suffering and disappointment.

His last
voyage,
1502.

Returns
to Spain,
1504.

The last two years of the life of the great discoverer are painful to think of : they were years of poverty and want and hopeless petitioning. The money which had been promised him had not all been paid to him, and he writes to his son at this time :

The last
years of
his life.

“I do not own a roof in Spain. I have no resort but an inn, and, for the most times, have not wherewithal to pay my bill.” Queen Isabella, who had always befriended him nobly, died only a few days after his return to Spain ; and Ferdinand, who had never been his cordial friend, would not listen to his request to be restored to his former position as governor of the new country.

On the 20th of May 1506, while he was still hoping to be restored to the favour of the king, he died peacefully, surrounded by a few faithful friends.

His death,
1506.

CHAPTER X.

COPERNICUS—THE RENAISSANCE—THE RISE OF MODERN ASTRONOMY.

COPERNICUS has been called the “great Columbus of the heavens,” because he did for our knowledge of the heavens what Columbus had done for our knowledge of the earth. Strangely enough, too, his great discovery followed that of Columbus by only a few years: it is in 1507 that he is supposed to have reached his conclusions regarding the true nature and movements of the heavenly bodies, which I shall explain to you by-and-by. He lived in a very interesting time in the history of Europe—a time which has been called the period of Renaissance. To explain what that word

means, I must remind you of what I told you before—that, after the fall of the Roman empire, the great works of the Greek and Roman poets and philosophers and dramatists were neglected and almost forgotten. During the centuries that followed the fall of Rome, when the wild tribes of Saxons and Goths and Normans were settling in the different countries of Europe, people were too much taken up with protecting their own country or with invading some other to be able to think of anything else; and it seemed as if the learning and art and civilization of Greece and Rome had been swept away by the great

The
Renaissance.

flood of barbarism that had poured into Europe,—as if a torrent of mud had spread over the smiling fields, burying beneath it the fair flowers and rich crops of learning and art so diligently sowed by the Greeks. But during what are called the Dark Ages, those buried flowers and crops had been steadily pushing their way upwards through their dark covering, and at length they reached the light, and amazed men with their beauty. The Greek spirit, which had fallen asleep in Hypatia at Alexandria, awoke again; the old Greek love of art and poetry and philosophy came once more to life. This reawakening or revival of learning is what is called the Renaissance.

I cannot tell you all the causes which helped to awake men's interest in learning, but I may mention some of them. Of course one great cause was that during the centuries since they had settled in Europe the different tribes had been gradually becoming more civilized. Then Dante's great poem, written in the language spoken by the people, would help to spread an interest in reading; and Dante was followed very shortly by two other Italian writers, Petrarch and Boccaccio. More than a century after the time of Dante, the art of printing was invented; and you can understand that this would help to bring books within the reach of people who before had been quite unable to get them. But what is generally supposed to be the chief cause of the revival of learning is the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

Causes
of the
Renaissance.

Dante's
poem.

Invention
of printing,
1440.

I have already told you how the Turks, a people of Central Asia, had risen to great power during the eleventh century, how they had conquered and spread over the country of the Arabs, and how they had even threatened Constantinople. Four centuries later they not merely

threatened that great city, but actually besieged and took it. The last Roman emperor, who, like the founder of the eastern capital, was called Constantine, fell fighting bravely, sword in hand. The Roman empire of the East had ceased to be; henceforth Constantinople was the capital of a Turkish monarchy. Many of the Greeks in the city fled before the conquering Turks, and spread themselves over the different countries of Europe, where they taught their own language, and helped at least to awaken among educated men a love of Greek literature and Greek learning.

It was twenty years after the fall of Constantinople, when Columbus was preparing for his great discovery by reading, and pondering, and studying maps and charts, that Nicholas Copernicus was born at Thorn, a town situated on the river Vistula, in what was then called the kingdom of Poland—a kingdom which no longer exists. Look in your map of Europe at the country through which the Vistula flows, with Russia to the east and Prussia to the west of it: that country is Poland. It is very far distant, as you will see, from Genoa, the birthplace of Columbus.

The father of Copernicus was a doctor, and Copernicus himself studied medicine, first at the great Polish university of Cracow, and afterwards at the university of Padua in Italy, where he took his degree. Even as a youth he had showed great talent for mathematics and astronomy, and after he left the university of Padua, he became professor of mathematics at Rome. Although he was wonderfully successful there, his lectures being attended by crowds of scholars, he did

The
taking
of Constan-
tinople,
1453.

Birth of
Copernicus,
1473.

His
education.

Becomes
professor in
Rome.

not remain long in Rome, but returned soon to his native country, and took up his abode in the town of Cracow. Here he lived very quietly for several years, going out very little, studying much, and observing constantly the stars and the heavens by the help of instruments which he himself had made. Afterwards he became a clergyman, and was made canon of Frauenburg; and this, of course, gave him many duties to perform—duties which he never neglected; but he still managed to find leisure to carry on his observations and his studies.

Returns to
Cracow.

It is in 1507, as I said, that he is supposed to have reached his great discovery in astronomy. During those years of study and observation, he had carefully noted the positions of the various heavenly bodies, and he gradually came to see that his observations did not fit in with the system of astronomy which had been believed in for centuries—with what is called the Ptolemaic system, from Ptolemy, the name of its founder. Ptolemy was an ancient astronomer of Hypatia's town, Alexandria, who lived about three centuries before her—in the second century A.C. According to him, the Earth which we live on was motionless and fixed, while the heavens moved round it in twenty-four hours. In this way he was able to account for the changes of night and day. But Copernicus saw that much that he had observed in the heavens could not be accounted for by this theory. For long he could not trust his own observations or even his own eyes. It seemed much easier to believe that he had somehow made a mistake, than that the theory which had been accepted by all the wise men who had lived during the last thirteen centuries could be wrong. But at last, after he had again and again

His great
discovery.

made his observations with the greatest care and with the same results, he was forced to come to the conclusion that the Ptolemaic system was wrong.

But if the explanation of Ptolemy with regard to day and night, the seasons, and the other movements of the heavenly bodies was not correct, what was the true explanation? Copernicus pondered long over this question without reaching any answer; but one day there flashed into his mind all at once, like a sudden revelation, what Pythagoras had said, the old Greek philosopher who had lived twenty centuries before—seven centuries before Ptolemy, and more than five before Christ. What if old Pythagoras was right after all in what was with him only a guess? What if, instead of this Earth of ours being fixed, it was really in motion? what if it, as well as the other planets, were constantly moving round the Sun? Eagerly he turned to his observations, and found with breathless, awe-struck wonder that, with the help of the mere guess of that old Greek philosopher, he could explain everything that had been dark to him before.

You have been accustomed to think of this Earth you live on as moving; you have learned quite early at school that day and night are caused by the rotation of the Earth on its own axis, and the year by its revolution round the Sun; but I am sure you can imagine the wonder, the amazement, the awe that filled the mind of Copernicus when this discovery burst upon him; when he realized, what he alone of all the millions of human beings in the world knew, that the Earth, apparently so motionless beneath his feet, was really moving—moving more swiftly than the fleetest horse.

He did not at once make known what he had discovered. He studied and pondered and observed as before;

and the longer he pondered, and the more he observed, the more certain he became that with the help of Pythagoras he had reached the truth. When he at last proclaimed his discovery, it was received as the project of Columbus had at first been received. Columbus, when he was trying to get the help of the king and queen of Spain for his proposed voyage, had been brought before a council of clergymen to be examined; and these good men had not only scoffed at and ridiculed his belief that the Earth was a globe, but had even declared that it was profane, as being contrary to the doctrine of the Bible, and they quoted texts to prove this. It was with equal ridicule, and with even louder accusations of profanity, that Copernicus was met by his fellow-men when he made public the conclusions which he had reached after so much patient thought and care.

Fortunately, however, one or two learned men were convinced that his theory was right, and they urged him to expound it in a book. During the years that he was writing this book, he suffered much from the ignorance and unkindness of his fellow-men, many of whom, though they were utterly ignorant of astronomy, thought they knew better than he, and looked with a kind of superstitious horror upon the man who had said that this solid Earth was in motion. He was an old man, worn out with work, anxiety, and pain, when at last the book was finished and conveyed safely to the printing-press at Nuremberg by a faithful friend. When it became known that the book was actually being printed, all the jealousy and ignorant superstition of his countrymen rose up in arms against him. He was denounced from the pulpit, and the people even attempted to break into the printing-works in order to

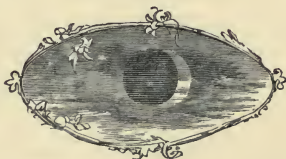
He makes
known his
discovery.

His book.

destroy the book. The printers worked at their types with a pistol lying ready at their side, and two faithful friends of Copernicus watched over the precious manuscript day and night.

Meantime Copernicus waited, in a state of the most intense excitement and anxiety, to receive the book completed from the hands of the printer. Every day he dreaded to hear that it had been destroyed, and that the work on which he had spent his life was lost. The excitement was too much for his weakened health: he broke a blood-vessel, and sank rapidly into utter feebleness and helplessness. Still, though he knew that death was near, he hoped that he might yet live to see the publication of his great work. He longed to have some proof before he died that the fruit of his years of thought and study should not be lost to mankind.

On the 23rd of May 1543 he was sinking rapidly. The shadows of death were stealing over him; a hushed silence reigned in the sick-room. Suddenly
His death,
1543. life flickered up into the dying face; a look of eagerness lit up the sunken eyes. A horse's footsteps are heard approaching nearer and nearer. Even before the door of his room is opened the dying man knows he has lived long enough—that his work is safe. Soon his wasted fingers grasp the volume he had longed to see. Then sinking back with a deep sigh, he faintly breathed his last prayer. "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace!"



CHAPTER XI.

LUTHER—THE REFORMATION.

AT the time when Copernicus was preparing to make public his great discovery, which was to bring about an entire reform in science, Luther had already begun in Germany a reform no less great—the reform of the church, of religion as it was taught and practised.

During the centuries that had passed since the fall of the western empire, Rome had gradually risen in power and increased in strength, till she had once more become supreme in Europe. All through what are called the Middle Ages, the Christian countries of Europe were governed by Rome —not from the throne of the emperor, as in the old days, but from the chair of the pope. It will appear strange to you that the bishop of Rome should have come to have such great power as to be able to rule great kingdoms simply by his word; but if you consider that he was regarded as the head of the church, and the representative on earth of Christ himself, you will be able to understand it better. In every Christian country of Europe, there were bishops and other clergymen who owed the position they occupied to the pope, and who were therefore regarded as in a special sense his subjects. These

The do-
minion of
the Church
of Rome.

The power
of the
pope.

men always kept the pope informed of everything of importance that went on in the countries where they were living; and if he disapproved of anything that took place in any country, he at once sent an order, or "bull," to the king of that country to put a stop to it. If the king ventured, as sometimes happened, to disobey the papal bull, he was excommunicated—that is, he was not allowed to enter a church, no clergyman was permitted to do anything for him, his subjects were not required to obey him, and, in short, he was looked upon as a sort of outcast from Christendom. No king, no man, could long endure such a state of things as this. After a short experience of being excommunicated, every one was found to be ready to do nearly everything the pope wanted. It was in this way that the power of the popes gradually became nearly boundless in Europe. Even if they had always been good men, such power was far too much for any one weak man to possess; but many of the popes were evil, wicked men, fond of pleasure and luxury, who did not shrink from any crime that might enable them to gain their object, so you can well understand that the supremacy of the pope of Rome was not a good thing for the countries of Europe.

If the popes were often wicked men, given up to pleasure and vice, so were many of the priests. In the monasteries, which were supposed to be quiet houses to which good men who loved learning could retire from the noisy world to study and meditate in peace, feasts and revels were sometimes held, and even great crimes were committed. Even before the time which we have now reached, good men had risen up and pointed out these evils, and tried to reform them. As early as 1155, a monk

Attempted
reforms
before the
Reformation.

called Arnold of Brescia was put to death at Rome for trying to make some reforms in the church. In the fourteenth century, our English Wyclif, who translated the New Testament, spoke out loudly against many of the evil customs common among priests and clergymen, and even against some points in the doctrine which they taught. In the beginning of the fifteenth century, the two Bohemian Reformers, Huss and Jerome of Prague, who had taken up the views of Wyclif, were burnt to death and their ashes thrown into the river Rhine; and in 1498, when Luther was a boy at school, and Columbus was acting as viceroy in his newly-discovered country, the noble monk Savonarola, who had dared to denounce the evils which he saw going on in the church, suffered the death of a martyr at Florence, the city of the poet Dante. But the man who succeeded in bringing about the Reformation was Martin Luther.

Arnold of
Brescia,
1155.

Wyclif.

Huss and
Jerome of
Prague.

Savonarola.

Luther was born in 1483, ten years after Copernicus, at Eisleben, a small town in about the centre of Germany. His father was only a poor miner; but he was an intelligent man, with an interest in learning. What was very unusual for a man in his position at that time, he had learned to read and write, and he taught his son Martin, whom he seems to have intended from the very first to make a "scholar." When Martin was about six years old, he had learned all his father could teach him, and was then sent to school. As a boy, the future Reformer seems to have been bright and intelligent, with a strong will of his own, and a love of fun, and even of mischief.

Birth of
Luther,
1483.

In 1497, when he was not yet fourteen, his parents, who had several children to keep, could not afford any

longer to support him, so he was sent out into the world,

He goes to with a bag on his back, to seek for more
Magdeburg, learning from the charity of strangers. Along
1497.

with another boy, he set out to walk to the town of Magdeburg, where there was a school for poor boys, kept by Franciscan monks. On the journey, Luther and his friend sometimes stopped at the houses they passed to beg for a piece of bread or a shelter for the night; and people were generally kind to the poor travelling scholars. At Magdeburg, and afterwards at Eisenach, where he went the following year, the poor boy had to endure the greatest hardship. In order to get food he was forced to go about the streets singing, and was thankful to accept a morsel of bread at a house-door. At last it became so difficult to get enough even to keep life in him, that he had almost made up his mind to give up his hopes of becoming a scholar, and to return home and win an honest livelihood with the spade,

Dame Cotta. when a good woman of Eisenach, called Dame Cotta, took pity on him, and persuaded her

husband to allow her to receive the boy into her house. There Luther lived for three years, during which he was treated with the greatest kindness, while he worked hard and diligently at his books.

In 1501 his father, who was now a little better off than he had been, was able, by great self-denial, to send

Luther goes his son to the university of Erfurt, where he
to Erfurt, took his degree of doctor in 1505. During
1501.

the last two years he had fallen into a strange melancholy state of mind, caused partly by the sudden death of a friend who was struck down at his side by a flash of lightning, and partly by a severe illness which he himself had. He was troubled in mind by religious difficulties. Thoughts of the wickedness of mankind

and the justice of God haunted him so that he could not get rest night or day ; and at last in order to get peace of mind, he resolved, much to the disappointment of his father, to enter a monastery.

He enters a
monastery,
1505.

For the first two years after entering the monastery he lived a life of the hardest work and scantiest food. Being only a probationer, he was made to do the humblest tasks for the monks—to clean, to keep the door, to beg—and whatever spare time he had he spent in hard study. In 1507 he was ordained a priest, and the next year he was appointed professor at the university of Wittenberg. In this town he spent the greater part of the following years of his life, not only teaching in the university, but also preaching in the churches, and gaining a great power over the people by his wonderful eloquence and his learning.

Becomes
professor at
Wittenberg,
1508.

It was in 1517 that an event happened which brought Luther forward as the upholder of the purity of Christ's gospel against the wicked practices of the Church of Rome. One of the worst customs common in the church was the sale of "indulgences," or pardons. When the pope wanted to raise money for any purpose, he would send out messengers from Rome to all the different countries, to sell pardons to the foolish, ignorant people, who believed that by paying money to the pope they could be absolved from the sins they had committed, and be permitted to enter heaven when they died without passing through Purgatory. Our English poet Chaucer, who lived more than a century before Luther—about the same time as Wyclif—describes a "pardoner" who had come to England with his wallet

Sale of
indulgences.

"Bretful of pardons come from Rome all hot,"

and tells us how this man could draw money out of the ignorant people. It was a man of this sort, a monk named Tetzel, who in 1517 came into Germany to collect money for the pope, by selling indulgences. The

Leo X. pope at that time was Leo X., a man who took great interest in learning and art, and who did a great deal to encourage both. At that time he wanted money to carry on the building of the magnificent cathedral of St. Peter's at Rome, and he resolved to raise it by a general sale of indulgences; so legates, or messengers, were sent into the different countries of Europe.

Luther was filled with burning indignation when he heard of this trading, this buying and selling in the church. He had studied his Bible carefully, and he knew well that it was not in the power of the pope, or of any other man, either to give or to sell pardon for sins. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that many other priests and learned men at that time must have understood this too; but they had not the courage, like Luther, to

**Luther
preaches
against
the sale of
indulgences,
1517.** brave the enormous power of the pope. Luther boldly stood up in the pulpit of the city church of Wittenberg, and preached against the doctrine that men could buy with money pardon of sin; and he afterwards published

his sermon. When Tetzel attempted to make a reply, Luther nailed up on the door of the church ninety-five sentences against indulgences, which **His
ninety-five
sentences.** were quite unanswerable. These the people read as they went into church, and it helped to open their minds to the folly and sinfulness of attempting to buy pardon.

After this, Luther was summoned before Cardinal Cajetan, the legate of the pope at Augsburg, who tried

to make him recant—deny what he had said, in the pulpit and elsewhere, about indulgences. This Luther refused to do; and he defended himself with so much learning and eloquence against all the arguments brought against him, that at last the patience of the cardinal was exhausted, and he ordered him angrily out of his presence.

Interview
with
Cajetan.

In 1520 the pope issued a bull of excommunication against Luther. Even this did not prevent the brave monk from preaching and declaring what he believed to be true. On the morning of the 11th December 1520, a strange scene took place at the eastern gate of the town of Wittenberg. A crowd of students and of robed professors of the university was gathered round a pile of blazing wood, beside which stood another professor, the monk Luther, his face pale and earnest, with a look of fixed determination upon it. Upon the pile he placed a number of books and papers; and as these burned up, he turned to the group gathered round him, and holding in his hand a document on which they could see the papal seal, he spoke a few calm words. He declared that he knew the danger he was running in doing what he was about to do; but that he could not draw back, he could not deny what he had already said and knew to be true. Then he dropped into the flames the papal bull. The light of that small bonfire shone over the whole of Europe, and lit up the darkness of ignorance in which men had been walking!

The papal
bull, 1520.

Luther
burns the
pope's bull.

After this the pope issued a second bull against Luther; and he was summoned by the emperor of Germany to appear before a diet, or council, assembled at Worms, a town in

Diet of
Worms,
1521.

the west of Germany, on the river Rhine. The emperor of Germany at that time, Charles V.,
Charles V. ruled over the largest empire which had existed in Europe since the time of Charlemagne. His mother was Joanna, the daughter of Queen Isabella of Spain, the noble friend of Columbus; and through her Charles had got Spain, Naples, Sicily, and the New World which Columbus had discovered; while through his father he became heir to Austria and to a large part of the Low Countries. Two years before the diet of Worms, Charles had been elected emperor of Germany (for the title did not pass from father to son, but was given to some able and powerful prince, who was elected by seven princes and bishops of Germany). Francis I. of France and our own Henry VIII. of England were both candidates for the high position at the time it was given to Charles.

When the emperor's summons to Luther to appear before him at Worms arrived at Wittenberg, some of Luther's friends advised him not to obey it, even though the emperor had promised him a safe-conduct both in going to and coming from Worms. They reminded him how Huss, the Bohemian Reformer, had been granted a safe-conduct to Constance, and how, in spite of it, he had been put to death. Luther, however, was quite unmoved by all their arguments, and set out bravely to answer the summons. On his journey, the people everywhere showed the sympathy which they felt with the views of the great Reformer, and their admiration for his learning and courage, by the kindness with which they welcomed him. When he reached Worms, a great number of friends flocked out to meet him, and even then tried to persuade him to turn back. But he answered boldly and vehemently, "If there were as

many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the roofs of the houses, I would go on!"

The following day, the 17th of April, he appeared before the council, a solitary, black-robed monk, confronted by the emperor in all his state, attended by countless dignitaries in splendid robes or brilliant uniforms—bishops, and princes, and dukes, and barons innumerable. Quite unabashed by all the glitter and splendour before him, Luther stood firm, ready to meet whatever was before him. His books lay on a table at hand. The titles of them were read over to him, and he was asked if he acknowledged having written them. Respectfully, but in a firm voice, he answered that he did. He was then asked if he was willing to retract what he had written. To this he replied that the question was too serious to answer at once, and requested time to consider. He was allowed till the following day, when he was again brought before the diet, and again asked the question, Was he willing to retract what he had written in his books? This time he replied that whatever he had written he had written according to his conscience, and to the teaching of Scripture as he understood it; and that he could not retract anything in his books unless it was proved to him by Scripture that he was wrong. Thus this humble monk, the son of a poor miner, had the courage to stand up for truth against church and state and all the power and pomp of this world.

The emperor did not break his promise of a safe-conduct. Luther left Worms under the protection of an escort granted to him; but after the following twenty-one days he was to be regarded as an outlaw in the empire—that is, no one might give him food or shelter without being guilty of

Luther is
outlawed.

treason. All good subjects of the empire were expected to watch for him, seize him, and bring him to trial; and his books were ordered to be burned. But Luther had a good friend in the elector of Saxony—the prince of that part of Germany in which Wittenberg is situated. This prince was not strong enough to protect Luther openly against the power of the emperor, but he chose a strange way of doing so privately.

He is carried off to Wartburg. On his journey back from Worms, the Reformer was suddenly attacked by two cavaliers with masks on, accompanied by several attendants. These men seized Luther, disguised him with a beard and a military uniform, and carried him off secretly to the castle of Wartburg.

Here he passed several months in safety, during which he began his translation of the Bible. But the brave, conscientious man was haunted by the thought that he ought not to be living in secret and in safety, but rather to be exposing his life in order to preach the truth; and at last, in March 1522, he left his safe retreat, and to the amazement of every one suddenly made his appearance again in his old pulpit at Wittenberg. After that he continued to preach, and crowds flocked to hear him.

Returns to Wittenberg. I cannot tell you here all the events that took place during the twenty-four years of life that still remained to him. In 1525 he married Catherine von Bora, who had been a nun, but who had left her convent and become a Protestant. In the Romish Church it was not considered right for a priest to marry; but Luther found nothing against it in the Bible. In 1534 he published his translation of the Bible, which helped people to see and to understand the truth of

His marriage.

Translation of the Bible.

the gospel for themselves, and increased the numbers of the Protestants. Five years before the publication of his translation of the Bible, the name Protestant had been given to the followers of Luther in consequence of the "protest" which was presented by six Protestant princes at the diet of Speier against some proposals of the Roman Catholic party.

In 1546 the great Reformer died at Eisleben, the town of his birth, worn out by long years of hard work—writing and preaching and disputing. With him modern history may be said to begin: henceforward the state of the countries of Europe is quite different from what it had been before the reformation which he brought about. They are no longer under the dominion of the Church of Rome as they had been during the long centuries of the Middle Ages. A single brave monk had not only brought about a reform of the church, but had set free the nations of modern Europe from the yoke of Rome. Strangely enough, modern history begins with what the classical period ends—the fall of Rome, though in the one case it is an emperor, in the other a pope, who is conquered.



MARTIN LUTHER.

Chronological Table of Events alluded to.

The Trojan War	B.C. 12th century
Birth of Homer.....	10th century
Foundation of Rome	753
Expulsion of the Tarquins	510
Birth of Sophocles	495
Battle of Marathon.....	490
Battle of Salamis.....	480
Birth of Socrates.....	469
Beginning of the Peloponnesian War.....	431
Death of Sophocles	405
End of the Peloponnesian War.....	404
Death of Socrates	399
Birth of Alexander the Great.....	356
Battle of Chæronea.....	338
Alexander sets out for Asia	334
Battle of Granicus.....	334
Battle of Issus.....	333
Founding of Alexandria	332
Death of Alexander	323
The Punic Wars begin	264
Battle of Cannæ.....	216
Birth of Cæsar.....	100
Birth of Virgil.....	70
Cæsar becomes consul.....	59
The Gallic Wars	58-49
First invasion of Britain.....	55
Battle of Pharsalia.....	48
Death of Cæsar	44
Battle of Philippi	42
Octavianus becomes emperor of Rome.....	31
Death of Virgil	19
Burning of Rome by Nero.....	A.D. 64
The Emperor Constantine proclaims liberty of worship to the Christians	313

Council of Nicæa	325
Founding of Constantinople.....	329
Division of the Roman empire.....	337
Death of Hypatia	415
Invasion of Britain by the Saxons.....	449
The last Roman emperor of the west deposed	476
Lombard conquest of Italy	568
Constantinople besieged by Arabs.....	668
Conquest of Spain by Arabs	711
Battle of Tours.....	732
Birth of Charlemagne	742
Charlemagne becomes king of the Franks	768
Conquest of the Lombards.....	774
Charlemagne crowned emperor at Rome.....	800
His death	814
Treaty of Verdun	843
Alfred the Great becomes king of England	871
Paris besieged by Northmen under Rollo.....	885
Cession of Normandy to Rollo	911
Birth of the Cid.....(<i>circa</i>) 1030-40	
The Norman Conquest of England	1066
Conquest of Jerusalem by the Turks.....	1076
The First Crusade	1096
Death of the Cid.....	1099
Jerusalem taken by the Crusaders.....	1099
League of Lombardy.....	1167
Peace of Constance.....	1183
Jerusalem retaken by Mohammedans	1187
Richard I. becomes king of England.....	1189
He sets out on a crusade.....	1190
His death	1199
Magna Carta.....	1215
Birth of Dante	1265
Battle of Stirling	1297
Dante is exiled.....	1301
Execution of Wallace.....	1305
Bruce crowned king	1306
Battle of Bannockburn.....	1314
Battle of Morgarten.....	1315
Death of Dante	1321
Death of Bruce.....	1329
Battle of Crécy.....	1346
Battle of Poitiers	1356
Birth of Joan of Arc.....	1411
Battle of Agincourt	1415
Treaty of Troyes.....	1420
Joan of Arc raises the siege of Orleans.....	1429
She is burned to death.....	1431

Columbus born	1436
Invention of printing	1440
Constantinople taken by the Turks.....	1453
Birth of Copernicus.....	1473
Birth of Luther	1483
Final conquest of the Moors in Spain.....	1492
Discovery of America.....	1492
Savonarola put to death.....	1498
Columbus sets out on his last voyage.....	1502
He dies.....	1506
Copernicus reaches his scientific discovery.....	1507
Luther becomes professor at Wittenberg.....	1508
Beginning of the Reformation.....	1517
Diet of Worms	1521
Death of Copernicus	1543
Death of Luther	1546



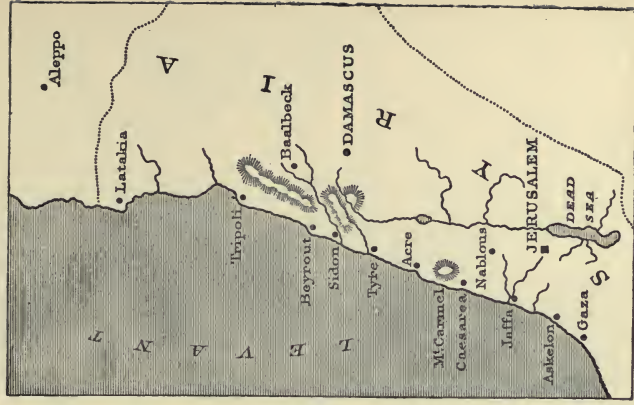
THE EMPIRE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

III.



THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

IV.



PALESTINE.

V.



EUROPE—FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.

VI.



THE EMPIRE OF CHARLEMAGNE.

VII.



CENTRAL SCOTLAND.

VIII.



FRANCE—TENTH CENTURY.

IX.



SPAIN—FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES.

X.



THE WEST INDIES—COLUMBUS.

XI.



THE LAND OF LUTHER.

INDEX.

- Achilles, 12-15.
 Acre, siege of, 98, 99; surrender of, 99.
 Æneas, 55-57.
Æneid, the, 54-57.
 Agamemnon, 12, 13.
 Agincourt, battle, 123.
 Aix-la-Chapelle, 81.
 Alaric, 68.
 Alcibiades, 27.
 Alcuin, 81.
 Alexander the Great, 31-37.
 Alexandria, founding of, 35; centre of learning, 61; Hypatia lectures at, 63.
 Alfred the Great, 83.
 America, discovery of, by Northmen, 83; by Columbus, 130-139.
 Ammon, 35.
 Anchises, 55.
 Angles, 69.
 Antigone, the story of, 21-23.
 Apollo, 25.
Arabian Nights, the, 95.
 Arabs, 75.
 Arbela, battle, 35.
 Aristotle, 33.
 Arnold of Brescia, 151.
 Arthur, King, 69-73.
 Ascanius, 56.
 Astronomy, the rise of modern, 142-148.
 Augsburg, 154.
 Augustan age, the, 54.
 Augustus, 53.
 Austria, duke of, 99-102.
 Azores, the, 131.
 Babylon, 36.
 Badenoch, earl of, 113.
 Bagdad taken by the Turks, 95.
 Bahama Islands, the, 138.
 Balliol, John, 111-113.
 Bannockburn, battle, 118, 119.
 Barbarossa, Frederick, 104.
 Barcelona, 139.
 Baudricourt, 125.
 Bavioca, 94.
 Beatrice, 105.
 Bianchi and Neri, 106.
 Bible, translation of the, 158.
 Black Prince, 122.
 Blondel, 101.
 Bobadilla, 140.
 Boccaccio, 143.
 Britain, effect of Roman conquest on, 66; settlement of the Saxons in, 68, 69.
 Britons, description of the ancient, 66, 67.
 Bruce, Edward, 118.
 Bruce, Nigel, 116.
 Bruce, Robert, the elder, 111.
 Bruce, Robert, the younger, 110-120.
 Brutus, 49-51.
 Bucar, king of Morocco, 94.
 Bucephala, 33.
 Bucephalus, 33.
 Burgos, 88.
 Burgundy, duke of, 127.
 Byzantium, 60, 61.
 Cadiz, 139.
 Cæsar, Julius, 45-51.
 Cajetan, Cardinal, 154, 155.
 Calpe, 89.
 Cannæ, battle, 45.
 Cardross, 119.
 Carrick, 116.
 Carrick, earl of, 113.
 Carthage, 40-44.
 Cassius, 49.
 Castile, 90.
 Catherine von Bora, 158.
 Chæroneæ, battle, 32.
 Charlemagne, 74-81.
 Charles V., emperor of Germany, 156.
 Charles VII. crowned at Rheims, 127.
 Charles the Fat, 84.

- Charles the Simple, 84.
 Chaucer, 153.
 Chinon, 126.
 Chivalry or knighthood, 96.
 Christ, birth of, 59.
 Christians, persecutions of the early, 59;
 liberty proclaimed to the, 60.
 Cid, the, 88-94.
 Cisalpine Gaul, 147.
 Colosseum, 60.
 Columbus, 83, 130-141.
 Comyn, the Red, 113, 114.
 Constance, peace of, 104.
 Constantine, 60.
 Constantinople besieged by Arabs, 75; fall
 of, 143, 144.
 Copernicus, 142-143.
 Cracow, 144.
 Creçy, battle, 121, 122.
 Creusa, 56.
 Crusades, the, 95-102.
 Cyprus taken by Richard, 98; sold by
 Richard, 98.
 Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, 63, 64.

 Dame Cotta, 152.
 Danes, the, 82.
 Dante, 103-109.
 Danube, Charlemagne's proposed canal be-
 tween the Maine and the, 80.
 Darius, king of Persia, 17.
 Dark ages, the, 76.
 Delphi, 25.
 Diaz, Rodrigo, 88-94.
Divina Comedia, the, 107-109.
 Domrémy, 123; legend of, 125.
 Don Alfonso, 92.
 Don Ferrando, 91.
 Don Sancho, 92.
 Douglas, Sir James, 119, 120.
 Dumfries, Bruce at, 113.

 Edward I., 111-117.
 Edward II., 115, 118, 119.
 Edward III., 119, 121.
 Eisenach, 152.
 Eisleben, 151.
 England, invasions of, by Northmen, 83.
 Ephialtes, 19.
 Erfurt, 152.
 Excalibur, 71-73.
 Excommunication of Luther, 150.

 Ferdinand, King, 134-141.
 Fife, countess of, 115.
 Florence, 103, 105, 151.
 Fontenay, battle, 84.
 France, invasions of, by Northmen, 84.

 Francis I. of France, 156.
 Franciscan monks, 152.
 Franks, 74, 75.
 Frauenburg, 145.

 Gallia Cisalpina, 47.
 Gallic wars, 46.
 Ganelon, 79.
 Gaul, 46; conquest of, by Franks, 75.
 Genoa, 131.
 Ghibelines, the Guelphs and the, 104-107.
 Gibraltar, 89.
 Gordium, 34, 35.
 Goths, the, 67.
 Granada, Moorish kingdom of, 135.
 Granicus, battle, 34.
 Greece, first invasion of, by the Persians,
 17; second invasion, 18; golden age of,
 20.
 Greek civilization, decay of, 58-65.
 Greek works of art, destruction of, 62.
 Greeks, the ancient, 9.
 Greeks, revolt of the, against Macedon, 34;
 defeated by Alexander, 34.
 Greenland, discovery of, by Northmen, 83.
 Gregory VII., 104.
 Guadalquivir, 89.
 Guelphs, the, and the Ghibelines, 104-107.
 Guy de Lusignan, Cyprus sold to, by
 Richard, 98.

 Hannibal, 45.
 Harald Harfager, king of Norway, 85.
 Harfleur, siege of, 122.
 Haroun-al-Rasheed, 95.
 Hayti, 139.
 Hector, son of Priam, 11-15.
 Helen of Troy, 11, 56.
 Hellespont, 34.
 Hengist, 69.
 Henry II., 98, 111.
 Henry V., 122, 123.
 Henry VI., 123.
 Henry VIII., 156.
 Hispaniola, 139.
 Holy Land, the, 95-102.
 Holy Sepulchre, the, 95.
 Homer, 10-15.
 Horsa, 69.
 Hundred Years' War, end of the, 121-129.
 Huns, the, 67.
 Huss, 151, 156.
 Hypatia, 60-65.

 Iceland, colonization of, 83.
 Ides of March, the, 50.
Iliad, the, 10-15.
 Ilium, 11.

- India, Alexander enters, 36.
 Indulgences, sale of, 153, 154.
 Isabella, Queen, 134-141.
 Isabella, mother of Edward III., 121.
 Islam, 90.
 Ismene, sister of Antigone, 22.
 Issus, battle, 35.
 Italian cities, rise of the, 103.

 Jerome of Prague, 151.
 Jerusalem, conquest of, by the Turks, 95;
 taken by the Crusaders, 97; taken from
 the Christians, 97.
 Joan of Arc, 121-129.
 Joanna, 156.
 John, King, 110.
 Julian, Count, 89.
 Jutes, the, 69.

 Kildrummie, 116.
 Kirkpatrick, earl of, 114.
 Knights Hospitalers, 97.
 Knights Templars, 97.
 Kreon, king of Thebes, 21-23.

 Lavinia, 57.
 Leonidas, 19.
 Leo X., 154.
 Lisbon, 132-134.
 Lombards, 74-78.
 Lombardy, 103; league of, 104.
 Loudon Hill, battle, 117.
 Louis, son of Charlemagne, 81, 84.
 Luther, Martin, 149-159.

 Macedon, the rise of, 32-35.
 Madeira, 131.
 Magdeburg, 152.
Magna Carta, 110.
 Maid of Orleans, 121-129.
 Mantua, 53.
 Marathon, battle, 17.
 Martel, Charles, 75, 76.
 Menelaus, king of Sparta, 11.
 Merlin, 70.
 Miltiades, 17, 26.
 Minerva, 55.
 Minorite Friars, 113.
 Mohammed, 90.
 Moors, settlement of, in Spain, 88-94; final
 conquest of, in Spain, 135, 136.
 Morea, the, 27.
 Morgarten, battle, 111.
 Münster, 76.
 Mythical Period, the, 9-15.

 Nero, 59.
 New World, discovery of the, 130-139.

 Nicæa, Council of, 60.
 Normandy, cession of, to Rollo, 86.
 Normans, settlement of, in France, 82.
 Northmen, the, 82-87.
 Nuremberg, 147.

 Oca, 90.
 Octavianus, 52; afterwards called Augustus, 53, 54.
 Odoacer, 67, 75.
Odyssey, the, 10.
 Œdipus, king of Thebes, 21.
 Olympus, 14.
 Orestes, 63.
 Orkney and Shetland, colonization of, 83.
 Orleans, 126; Joan of Arc raises the siege
 of, 127.
 Orleans, Maid of, 121-129.
 Ostrogoths, the, 75.

 Padua, 144.
 Pagans, the, 62.
 Palestine, 119.
 Palos, 139.
 Paris, siege of, by Northmen, 84.
 Paris, son of Priam, 11.
 Patay, 127.
 Patroclus, 13.
 Pavia, 78, 131.
 Peleus, 12.
 Peloponnesian war, the, 26, 27; effects of
 the, 31.
 Pembroke, earl of, 117.
 Pepin, 76.
 Persian wars, the, 16-20.
 Persians defeated by Alexander, 34, 35.
 Petrarch, 143.
 Pharsalia, battle, 48.
 Philip of Macedon, 32-34.
 Philip, king of France, 98, 99.
 Philippi, battle, 52.
 Plato, 28.
 Poetry, the rise of modern, 103-109.
 Poitiers, battle, 122.
 Poland, 144.
 Polynices, brother of Antigone, 21.
 Pompey, 47.
 Pope, the power of the, 149-151.
 Portuguese discoveries, the, 131.
 Priam, King, 11, 55.
 Printing, invention of, 143.
 Protestants, 159.
 Provence, 46.
 Prussia, 99.
 Ptolemies, the, 61, 62.
 Ptolemy, the astronomer, 145.
 Punic wars, the, 40-44.
 Pythagoras, 146, 147.

- Randolph, Bruce's nephew**, 119.
Ravenna, 107.
Reformation, the, 149-159.
Regulus, 38-44.
Renaissance, the, 142-148.
Rheims, Charles VII. crowned at, 127.
Richard Cœur de Lion, 95-102.
Robert of Normandy, 96.
Roderick, the last of the Goths, 88, 89.
Rodrigo Diaz, 83-94.
Roland, nephew of Charlemagne, 79.
Rollo, 82-87.
Roman Empire, foundation of the, 52-57;
 division of the, 61.
Roman Empire of the West, fall of the,
 67-69; **second Empire of the West**, 80.
Rome, foundation of, 38; **rise of**, 39-44;
 state of, during reign of Augustus, 58;
 state of, during first four centuries of
 Christian era, 59; **besieged by Gothic**
 chiefs, 68; **the dominion of the Church**
 of, 149.
Romulus, 57.
Rouen, 123.
Round Table, Knights of the, 71.
Rubicon, the, 48.

St. Catherine, Church of, 126.
St. Peter's, 154.
Saladin, 99.
Salamis, battle, 18.
Savonarola, 151.
Saxons, settlement of, in Britain, 68, 69;
 Charlemagne fights against the, 77, 78.
Saxony, elector of, 158.
Scandinavians, the, 82.
Scone, Bruce crowned at, 115.
Scotland, Edward conquers, 112; **inde-**
 pendence of, 110-120.
Shetland, colonization of Orkney and, 83.
Sicily, 98.
Sinon, 54.
Sir Bedivere, 71-73.
Socrates, 24-30.
Sophocles, 20, 21.
Southey, 93.
Spain, expedition into, by Charlemagne, 78;
 settlement of the Moors in, 88-94; **war**
 between the king of, and the Moors, 135.
Sparta, 11.
Speier, diet of, 159.

Stirling, battle, 112.
Switzerland, the struggle in, 110.

Tarik, 89.
Tarquin, King, 38.
Tell, 110.
Tennyson, *Coming of Arthur*, 69-71; *Pass-*
 ing of Arthur, 71-73.
Tetzel, 154.
Teutonic Knights, the, 99.
Teutonic tribe, 75.
Thebes, 21, 32.
Themistocles, 20.
Theon, 62.
Thermopylæ, battle, 18, 19.
Thetis, 14.
Tours, battle, 75.
Trifels, 101.
Trojan war, the, 10-15.
Troy, 11-15; destruction of, 55.
Troyes, treaty of, 123.
Turks, the, 95, 96.
Turnberry, 116.
Tyre, 35.

Valencia, 93.
Vandals, the, 67.
Venus, 56.
Verdun, treaty of, 84.
Vesta, 56.
Vikings, 82.
Vinland, 83.
Virgil, 53-57.
Visigoths, the, 89.
Vita Nuova, the, 106.
Vortigern, 69.
Vulcan, 14.

Wallace, Sir William, 112, 113.
Wartburg, Luther is carried off to, 158.
Westminster Abbey, 112.
William the Conqueror, 83.
William the Lion, 111.
Wittenberg, 153, 158.
Wittikind, 78.
Worms, diet of, 155-157.
Wyclif, 151.

Xanthippe, 24, 29.
Xenophon, 27, 28.
Xerxes, 12.



TORCH-BEARERS OF HISTORY

(SECOND SERIES)

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VOL. II.—FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE BEGINNING OF
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

BY

AMELIA HUTCHISON STIRLING, M.A. EDIN.

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Cheltenham*



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P R E F A C E.

IN the preface to the first volume of these historical sketches, which appeared some two years ago, it was stated that the object of the book was "to give young readers some idea of the way in which the torch of history has been handed on in Europe from age to age and from nation to nation, beginning in ancient Greece, and coming down to modern Germany, where, with Luther, modern history may be said to begin." Its method was to select, "out of each of the great epochs, some representative man or woman whose life was capable of forming an interesting story, taking care to *connect* the sketches as far as was possible without introducing too much detail."

In the present series, in which the original plan of gathering the events of history round a central figure is still maintained, perhaps a little more has been attempted. As the period covered—the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries—is much shorter than that over which the first series extends, it has been found possible to follow events more closely and more fully; and perhaps it is not too much to say that, for the class of readers for whom it is intended, the present volume will be found to contain a fairly complete sketch

of European history during the three centuries with which it deals. It is, of course, needless to say that the book is not written for those who have made history a special study, but for general readers whose historical knowledge is limited, and in particular for young readers. These, it is hoped, will find that, while few events of *first* importance, such as a fairly well-educated boy or girl might be expected to know, have been omitted, no dry or unimportant details have been mentioned which it was found possible to omit.

A. H. S.

EDINBURGH, *March 1895.*

CONTENTS.

PART III.

FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE BEGINNING OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

I. WILLIAM OF ORANGE—THE FOUNDATION OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC —THE SUPREMACY OF SPAIN,	9
II. SIR FRANCIS DRAKE—THE RISE OF ENGLAND'S NAVY,	33
III. HENRY OF NAVARRE—SETTLEMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS STRUGGLE IN FRANCE,	55
IV. GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS—THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR,	74
V. CARDINAL RICHELIEU—FOUNDATION OF SUPREMACY OF FRANCE, ...	92
VI. OLIVER CROMWELL—THE STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN ENGLAND—OVERTHROW OF ABSOLUTE MONARCHY, ...	106
VII. SIR ISAAC NEWTON—DISCOVERY OF THE LAW OF GRAVITATION, ...	136
VIII. WILLIAM III. —THE BALANCE OF POWER—SETTLEMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN,	155
IX. PETER THE GREAT—THE RISE OF RUSSIA,	178
X. FREDERICK THE GREAT—THE RISE OF PRUSSIA—FOUNDATION OF UNITY OF GERMANY,	197
XI. ROBERT CLIVE—THE FOUNDATION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA,	221
XII. GEORGE WASHINGTON—FOUNDATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,	246
<hr/>	
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS ALLUDED TO,	268
INDEX,	273

LIST OF MAPS.

The Netherlands,	...	...	...	...	...	14
North and South America,	...	...	...	...	...	37
Rochelle,	...	...	...	...	...	56
France,	...	...	...	...	...	60
Germany—The Thirty Years' War,	...	...	...	...	...	82
England—The Civil War,	...	...	...	...	...	116
Torbay,	...	...	...	...	...	164
The Boyne,	...	...	...	...	...	168
Glencoe,	...	...	...	...	...	170
Russia and Central Europe,	...	...	...	...	...	190
Prussia in 1740,	...	...	...	...	...	205
Prussia—The Seven Years' War,	...	...	...	...	...	214
Prussia in 1772,	...	...	...	...	...	218
Southern India,	...	...	...	...	...	228
Bengal,	...	...	...	...	...	234
Canada—Quebec,	...	...	...	...	...	241
India,	...	...	...	...	...	245
The United States,	...	...	...	...	...	253
Boston and Lexington,	...	...	...	...	...	259
Bunker's Hill and Breed's Hill,	...	...	...	...	...	261

TORCH-BEARERS OF HISTORY.

PART III.

*FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE BEGINNING OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

CHAPTER I.

WILLIAM OF ORANGE—THE FOUNDATION OF THE
DUTCH REPUBLIC—THE SUPREMACY OF SPAIN.

DURING the first half of the sixteenth century, the chief events of history may be said to have been the consequences of the life-work of two of the "torch-bearers" in our previous series—Columbus and Luther. The history of the period is the record of romantic adventures and daring expeditions on the one hand, and of religious struggle and religious persecution on the other. The discovery of a new world beyond the Atlantic had aroused the imagination of mankind; the preaching of the truth and purity of the gospel by Luther had stirred to their deepest depths the human heart and soul. Thus while the adventurous and daring spirits of the time set out upon the ocean that had been so short a time before a dreaded mystery, to gain glory and wealth by the discovery and

Character of
first half of
16th century.

conquest of unknown lands, the deeper, more thoughtful souls were undergoing a silent struggle within themselves, or were openly declaring their faith in defiance of persecution. It was a wonderful time. Almost every breeze that swept across

**Discoveries
in the begin-
ning of the
century.**

the Atlantic from the far West brought news of lands discovered, of savage races conquered, and of gold and other treasure obtained to fill to overflowing the coffers of Spain. It was from Spain that by far the greater number of expeditions set out at that time.

**Portugal in
15th century.**

In the previous century, Portugal had led the way in discovery by sea: the Portuguese had first coasted western Africa and discovered the Cape of Good Hope; and it was a Portuguese admiral, Albuquerque, who had conquered early in the sixteenth century a part of the coast of India, and founded the first European settlements in that vast peninsula, which was destined three centuries later to come under the dominion of a comparatively small island in the North Sea. After the time of Columbus, however, Spain

took the lead in expeditions of discovery.

Spain.

Every high-spirited Spanish cavalier at that time seemed to be filled with a burning desire to earn fame and fortune for himself in the mysterious world of the West, similar to that which inspired the squire of old to win his spurs. It was a Spaniard, Balboa, who from "a peak in Darien"—the isthmus between North and South America, where Columbus had expected to find a strait—first of Europeans, "gazed on the Pacific," that vast ocean of the West of which only vague rumours had so far been known. It was a Spaniard, Cortez, who, in 1521—the year of the Diet of Worms—conquered for his king the vast and wealthy empire of Mexico. They were Spanish ships that, about

the same time, made the first voyage round the world under the Portuguese Magellan, who has given his name to the strait on the south of the southern continent of America.

**First voyage
round the
world.**

No wonder that, with wealth flowing in from so many sources, Spain was the most powerful kingdom of Europe. But even without his possessions in the New World, Charles I. of Spain would have been the greatest monarch of his time, for his dominions in Europe itself were both rich and extensive. From his mother, Joanna, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, he had inherited, besides Spain itself, Naples and Sicily; through his father, the Archduke of Austria, he had acquired the Netherlands and Austria; and when, in 1519, he was chosen Emperor of Germany, under the title of Charles V., he ruled over the largest empire that had existed in Europe since the time of Charlemagne. Only France was needed to complete his dominions, and a great part of his reign was taken up with a struggle with its king, Francis I., while Henry VIII. of England threw his weight now on the one side, now on the other. These three young kings, with the pope, formed the great powers of Europe; and their battles, and schemes, and struggles for power may almost be said to make up its history at this time. Charles V., who was of the age of the century, was the youngest of the three in years, but perhaps in character the eldest—cautious, cunning, self-controlled, with little love of youthful sports. He belonged, too, to the old order of things: his ambition was to bring Europe into the condition in which it had been in the time of Charlemagne, with one great temporal power, the emperor, and one great spiritual power, the pope. He was naturally opposed to the Reformation,

**The king of
Spain elected
emperor,
1519.**

and did what he could to crush it. But the number of those who adopted the Reformed doctrines con-

Diet of
Speier,
1529.

tinued to increase. In 1529, the name of

Protestants was given to them, because at the

Diet of Speier they *protested* against a decree forbidding any reform in religion; and in the following year, the Protestant princes of Germany formed them-

Smalkaldic
League,
1530.

selves into a league, known as the Smalkaldic League, for the defence of their faith.

Charles, who had a war with the Turks on his hands at the time, was forced to grant them, for the time, liberty of conscience, which was confirmed, twenty-five years afterwards, by the Peace of Augsburg. The year following the Peace of Augsburg, in 1556, Charles surprised the world by abdicating in favour of his son Philip, the husband of Mary I. of England, and by retiring to a monastery, where he died two years later.

His two royal rivals, Henry VIII. of England and Francis I. of France, had died eleven years before him,

Spread of
the Reforma-
tion.

within a few months of each other, and only a year after Luther. The great reformer

had lived long enough to see the spread of the doctrine he preached into almost every country of Europe. In 1534, England had renounced allegiance to the pope, and Henry VIII. had made himself supreme head of the English church; in Geneva, the celebrated reformer Calvin was ruling as a sort of Protestant pope; while in several of the Swiss cantons the Reformed faith had been adopted, and in Denmark and Sweden, France and Scotland, it was rapidly spreading.

At the time when Philip ascended the throne of Spain, Scotland, though only a small mountain-country in the north of the island of Britain, was playing an

important part in the politics of Europe. Mary Stuart, the young queen, whose sad story has made her a subject of so much interest to all readers of history, was then a girl of some fourteen years, and was being educated in France under the care of her powerful uncles, the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Duke of Guise; while her mother, Mary of Guise, was acting as regent in Scotland, and John Knox, the future reformer, was in exile in Geneva for his faith. The Cardinal of Lorraine was perhaps the ablest man in France; and his pet scheme was to restore the power of the pope in the island of Britain, and to unite Scotland, England, and France under one crown, which was to be worn by his niece Mary, who, besides being Queen of Scotland in her own right, was betrothed to the Dauphin of France, and was next heir to the throne of England after Elizabeth. Thus Scotland was the centre of many plots, and was soon to be engaged in a great struggle, which was to end in the establishment of the Reformed faith in the country.

But interesting though the Reformation struggle in Scotland no doubt is, it has not the same European importance as the events which took place shortly afterwards in the low-lying country at the mouths of three great European rivers, the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt. There, during the centuries when the other nations of Europe were fighting their battles and making their history, a patient, industrious people had been carrying on, under a sky that is almost always heavy with sea fogs, a silent struggle with the sea, building dams or *dikes* of stone to prevent the low land on which their homes were built from being flooded. Though far from deficient in courage, as we shall see, the Netherlanders

State of
Scotland,
1556.

Character
of the
Netherlands.

did not care for fighting for fighting's sake. They devoted themselves to the cultivation of the land, to manufacture, and to commerce, and by these means had



become the richest subjects of the vast kingdom of Spain.

But though the Netherlands belonged at this time to the king of Spain, they were not a *part* of Spain, nor were they subject to the king in the same way as his Spanish dominions. Each of the seventeen provinces into which they were divided had its own government, or Assembly of Estates.

Their
political
condition.

as it was called, and each of the great cities had its freedom secured to it by a special charter. When the king required money to carry on his wars, the Estates and cities were always willing to give him a *grant*; but they denied his right to *demand* money of them. Charles V., who was the first Spanish king that ruled over the Netherlands, had been brought up among the people, and understood how to deal with them. But his son and successor, Philip II., was a thorough Spaniard, and he was foolish enough to believe that he could govern the people of the Netherlands in the same way as he governed his Spanish subjects. The attempt to do so ended in the loss of the richest of his dominions—the first step in the downfall of Spain.

So long as he respected their rights, the people were willing to help him in his wars both with money and with men. In 1559, a noble of the Netherlands, the Count of Egmont, had won for him, with Netherland troops, a brilliant victory over the French at St. Quentin, which put an end for a time to the war between France and Spain, and brought about the celebrated Peace of Câteau Cambrésis. One of the chief negotiators.

Peace of
Câteau
Cambrésis,
1559.

of that peace with France was William of Nassau, Prince of Orange. He belonged to one of the noblest families of the Netherlands. His father had been a distinguished general of Charles V.; and he himself had so early gained the esteem and favour of that emperor that, when only some one-and-twenty years of age, he was appointed general-in-chief of the forces on the French frontier. When quite a boy, he had inherited from a cousin the little principality of Orange in France, which gave him the title by which he was generally known.

William of
Orange.

It was in 1559—the year in which Knox returned to Scotland to lead the Reformation struggle there—that William of Orange formed the resolution that shaped his after life. He had been chosen by Henry II., King of France, as one of the hostages for the fulfilment of the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis, which he had helped to negotiate; and while in France, he had learned from the king the scheme which he and Philip of Spain had formed to crush the Protestants in their respective dominions. Orange was at that time still a Catholic, but he determined to do all in his power to save the Protestants. In days when even such a great man as Calvin thought it right to punish with death an error in religious belief, the Prince of Orange had the breadth of mind to desire that every man should have liberty to worship God in the way his own conscience approved. He did not boast of the resolution he had formed. Though he could be eloquent at times, he was usually so reserved, so little given to talk, that he had earned the nickname of William *the Silent*.

It was not long before his resolution was put to the test. Philip, who had returned to Spain after the peace, soon gave many causes of offence to the people of the Netherlands. He left a Spanish army quartered upon them, contrary to their ancient rights; he gave the entire power of government to his sister, the Duchess of Parma, whom he had appointed regent, and to a Spanish cardinal, Granvella; he appointed several new bishops in the Netherlands, and strengthened the Inquisition there. Orange, together with Egmont, wrote to the king more than once complaining of these grievances; but though the army and the cardinal were withdrawn from the Provinces, the bishops

**Offences
of Philip
against the
Provinces.**

and the Inquisition remained. Thousands of the people who had adopted the Reformed faith—most of them skilled weavers—fled from the country and took refuge in England, where great changes had lately taken place. The reign of the Protestant queen Elizabeth, which was destined to be such a long and prosperous one, had begun in 1558, and the Protestants who had been exiles from their country during the reign of Queen Mary, had now returned to their homes. The Flemish weavers found a ready welcome in England, where they improved the English in the arts of cloth-making and silk-weaving, and thus helped to lay the foundations of the future commercial greatness of that nation. In Scotland, the Reformation had been accomplished in 1560, chiefly through the zeal and eloquence of John Knox; and the young queen, after having worn the crown of France for a few months, had returned to Scotland a widow of nineteen years of age, to begin that career of wilful opposition to all the wishes and beliefs of her subjects, which was soon to end in her imprisonment, and later in her execution.

While such was the state of affairs in Britain, in the Netherlands a league was formed, known as the "Compromise," and a petition was presented to the regent begging her to suspend the Inquisition. Seeing that she was excited by the petition, one of her counsellors remarked soothingly that he wondered the regent could fear "these beggars;" and the name stuck—the confederates were afterwards known as *Les Gueux* (The Beggars), and adopted a beggar's wallet as their badge. Great excitement now prevailed among the people, and like the rabble, or what Knox had called the "rascall multitude," in Scotland six years before, they tore down

The "Com-
promise,"
1566.

"The
Beggars."

the images and statues and ornaments in the churches throughout the country. The regent in alarm, ^{The} "Accord," fearing a general rising of the people, hastily published an edict, called the "Accord," which put a stop to the Inquisition, and gave permission to the Reformed ministers to preach in those places in which they had been accustomed to preach before the signing of the "Accord."

But Orange, though he did what he could to put a stop to the riots by means of these promises of the regent, knew very well that they had only been wrung from her by fear, and that she had no intention of keeping them. He had had opportunities of studying her character as well as that of her brother King Philip, and he was well aware that she was not without a share of that deceit and duplicity which he possessed in such an extraordinary degree. In all history there is not an example of any one whose statements were more untrustworthy than those of King Philip. Gloomy, reserved, ambitious, and calculating, he spent the day in his cabinet buried in state papers, endeavouring to conquer the world by intrigue and cunning, since he had not the military genius to do so by force of arms. Again and again we find him writing in the most friendly and affectionate way to men whose death-warrant he had already signed. Orange knew that there was only one way in which he could ^{Orange's} combat such a man, and he adopted it: among ^{spies.} the attendants and secretaries of the king he had paid spies, who informed him of all the king's movements, and who even sent him copies of his most private letters. Thus while Margaret of Parma was writing to her "cousin of Orange" that he was "loved and cherished by his majesty, and that for herself she

had ever loved him like a brother," the prince knew well that it was Philip's intention to conquer the Netherlands with foreign troops, and to put him and the other patriotic nobles to death. But he never wavered in his resolution to stand up for the rights of the 'Provinces and for religious toleration. It was in the same year as the image-breaking riots that he wrote a pamphlet earnestly but modestly urging the government to allow some degree of religious freedom ; it was in the very next year, 1567, that he was forced into the position of a rebel to the king.

Philip gave orders that all magistrates and office-bearers throughout the Provinces should take a new oath, which pledged them to obey *every* The new oath. *command* of the king, no matter what, against every person, no matter whom. Orange saw that, were he to bind himself by such an oath, he would find himself forced to do actions contrary to his conscience—perhaps even to put his dearest friend to death. He refused to take it. Egmont, on the contrary, although he had signed the "Compromise," and most of the other nobles who were not exiled or in prison, hastened eagerly to take the oath as a proof of their loyalty to Philip. The prince stood almost alone. He had tried to induce Egmont to join him in raising troops to protect the freedom of the states ; but the count would not be persuaded. He was bent on regaining the favour of the king, and had thrown himself, with a sort of fierce zeal, into the work of putting down the image-breaking riots and punishing the rioters. In his eagerness to prove his loyalty, he was guilty of many acts of severity and even of cruelty. But all his zeal now could not save his life. The prince, who had a sincere affection for him, warned him of the fate in store for him. "I fore-

see too clearly," he said, "that you are to be the bridge which the Spaniards will destroy so soon as they have passed over it to invade our country." His words proved too true—that very year the hero of St. Quentin was beheaded by the order of the king, for whom he had won his brilliant victory, and in whose faith he had foolishly trusted to the very last.

Meanwhile, Orange had resigned all the offices he held in the state, and had withdrawn to Germany. At present there was nothing he could do but watch and wait his time. The king had sent into the Provinces a terrible minister of vengeance. The Duke of Alva had arrived with an army to punish the rebels and to restore order in the Netherlands. The Duke of Alva was one of the ablest generals of his day, and one of the most ferocious and vindictive men in history. So terrible are the acts of cruelty recorded of him, that, in these days, we find it almost impossible to believe that a human being could be capable of them. His instructions were to put to death the leaders of the opposition to the Inquisition, to crush heresy in the Provinces, and to establish the absolute authority of Spain. The Netherlands were to be deprived of all their old rights, and made entirely subject to Philip; while the Reformed doctrines were to be put down by means of the scaffold and the stake.

To effect these ends, Alva formed a council for the examination of those who were suspected of having taken part in the late disturbances. It was known, in consequence of the extreme cruelty of its sentences, as the Council of Blood. Men and women of every class were sentenced to death after the merest pretence of a trial, and for the most trifling

Death of
Egmont,
1568.

The Duke
of Alva,
1567.

The Council
of Blood.

accusations. Sometimes as many as eighty or ninety were tried together, sentenced, and instantly put to death. No one felt safe. The Count of Egmont, as we have seen, was one of the victims; and the Prince of Orange was summoned to appear for trial. He refused to acknowledge the authority of the council. In revenge, Alva had his eldest son, a boy of thirteen, carried off from the college where he was placed, and taken to Spain, where he grew up a Spaniard.

Meantime, the prince was doing all he could unaided to bring help to his unhappy country; for he was resolved to do his utmost to protect the freedom of the Provinces, and to secure religious liberty for the people. He was here and there, exerting all his eloquence both in speech and in writing, to induce the Protestant princes in Germany and the government of England to give him help. He sold his plate, his jewels, everything he could sell, to raise money for an army, and begged from all who were likely to give.

**Efforts of
the prince.**

At length the money was raised, but, alas, the army effected almost nothing. One division, under Count Louis of Nassau, the brother of the prince, at first won a slight victory over the Spaniards, but was afterwards cut to pieces at Jemmingen, through the skill with which Alva took advantage of a blunder made by Count Louis. Two other divisions, composed chiefly of French Protestant refugees, were even less successful. The prince himself led out a fourth division. He was not to be daunted by these losses, nor by the warnings and exhortations of the Emperor of Germany and the Protestant princes, all of whom could only repeat, "Your highness must sit still." He transported his troops across the river Meuse, almost

**Defeat of
his army,
1568.**

in sight of the enemy, with so much skill that the Duke of Alva would not believe that the passage was accomplished. "Is the army of the Prince of Orange a flock of geese," he asked, "that it can fly over rivers?" But the passage of the Meuse was the only triumph at this time of the unhappy prince. After about a month, during which Alva skilfully avoided giving him a chance of battle, he had to disband his army, which had begun to mutiny because the pay was in arrears.

He was now outlawed, and almost beggared; his estates were confiscated; but he still clung to his ideal —freedom for the Provinces, religious liberty for the people. After much serious thought, he had about this time become a Protestant; but he desired that Catholics as well as Protestants should be free to worship God in the way their consciences approved.

After disbanding his army, he went to France with his two brothers, Count Louis and Count Henry of Nassau, to help the Protestants there in their struggle for their religion. Before his arrival, they had fought and lost a great battle at Jarnac, in which their leader, the Prince of Condé, had fallen. The head of the Protestants in France, or of the Huguenots, as they were called, was now Admiral Coligny, perhaps the ablest general of his age, and certainly one of the noblest characters in history —reserved, thoughtful, earnest, ever ready to sacrifice self for the cause he had at heart. His dearest scheme was to unite the two religious parties in France by their common jealousy of Spain, and to induce them to make a combined attack on Philip's forces in the Netherlands and on his colonies in the New World. For a short time it seemed as if his schemes were to

He becomes
a Protestant.

Battle of
Jarnac,
1569.

be carried out. In 1570, a peace was formed between the two religious parties in France. Coligny resolved to benefit by it in order to try to persuade the French government to adopt his plan of attacking Spain. In 1572, in spite of the advice and warnings of his friends, he went to Paris, where he succeeded in gaining great influence over the young king, Charles IX., the brother-in-law of Mary of Scotland, a weak-minded and passionate young man, with a love of sport, and even some warlike spirit, who had hitherto been almost entirely under the power of his mother, Catherine de Medici. Now, however, it seemed as if he were won over to the Protestants by the tales of siege and battle which he loved to hear from the lips of the brave admiral, and by the frank, soldier-like bearing of Louis of Nassau, who had also gone to Paris to endeavour to gain help for his unhappy country. That help appeared at hand: a small body of troops was sent into the Netherlands by Coligny, who confidently expected to be able to follow later himself with an army; while the king wrote to Louis of Nassau that he would "devote all the power which God had given him" to the liberation of the Netherlands.

Coligny
in Paris.

Other events favoured the hopes of the prince at this time. During the four years since the campaign in 1568, Alva had, by his continued persecutions and his ferocious cruelty, gained for himself the bitter hatred of the Netherlanders, — a hatred which was very much increased by an attempt which he made to raise money by means of a tax of the *tenth penny* on everything sold. This tax would simply have ruined the trade and commerce of the Netherlands; the people shut up their shops and their works rather than pay it. Alva was preparing to show his anger by

Hatred
of Alva.

the execution of some shopkeepers; William of Orange, in his retreat in Germany, feeling that the time had come to strike a blow, was moving earth and heaven to get funds to raise an army, when, in April 1572, both

**Taking of
Brille,
1572.**

were startled by the news that the town of Brille, on the coast of the Netherlands, had been taken in the prince's name by a small fleet of "Water Beggars," or "Beggars of the Sea." These were seafaring men attached to the cause of freedom in the Netherlands, to whom the prince had given commissions to attack Spanish ships and rifle them of their treasure and merchandise. A small number of their vessels, under William de la Marck, had been driven into the harbour of Brille by want of provisions, and with the daring of desperation had demanded the surrender of the town. To their surprise their demand was obeyed, the citizens believing their numbers to be much greater than they really were. The town of Flushing next declared for the prince; and its example was followed by all the important cities of the two sea-coast provinces of Holland and Zealand, and by many in the other provinces. Thus by a mere accident, as it were, was the movement begun which was to end, after much bloodshed and suffering, in the establishment of the Dutch republic. But as yet the states had no thought of becoming a republic. The revolt was only against Alva, not against the king, to whom they still swore allegiance, as well as to William of Orange as the king's stadtholder, a position which the king had conferred on him in 1559, and which he still held.

Meantime, Louis of Nassau had surprised the important town of Mons; a small body of French troops was marching to support him; and the prince had managed to raise an army by in-

ducing the chief cities of Holland and Zealand to promise funds for three months' pay. Well might he believe, as he advanced with his army, that Alva was in his power and the Netherlands free. But just when his hopes were brightest, a blow was struck by a woman's hand which, as he said himself, smote him "with the blow of a sledge-hammer."

Catherine de Medici, jealous of the influence which Coligny had gained over her son the king, resolved to put an end to it. By her orders, an attempt was made to kill the admiral as he was entering his own house in Paris. He was wounded, but not killed. The Protestants, who had assembled in Paris in great numbers to be present at the marriage of the young King of Navarre, of whom we shall see more later, gathered round their leader, and carefully guarded him. There were even murmurs of vengeance; and Catherine believing, or pretending to believe, that there was about to be a general rising of the Huguenots, and that her life and the king's were not safe, persuaded him to consent to a general massacre of the Huguenots. Early in the morning of the 24th August, the day sacred to St. Bartholomew, the bells of Paris were rung, and the mob, who were mostly bigoted Catholics, were let loose upon the Huguenots, whom they plundered and murdered in the name of the king. The Duke of Guise, cousin of Mary of Scotland, was present at the murder of the noble Coligny. In many cities throughout France the example of Paris was followed, and thousands of people were cruelly butchered for no fault but that of being Protestants.

Catherine of
Medici and
Coligny.

Massacre of
St. Barthol-
omew, 1572.

This event, the news of which smote Orange "like

the blow of a sledge-hammer," was celebrated at Rome by a solemn procession and thanksgiving to God ; while the usually grave and gloomy Philip of Spain received the tidings with smiles of joy, and even with laughter !

Effects on the Netherlands. The revolt of the Netherlands was for the time at least practically crushed, now that no help could any longer be looked for from France, and the Protestants were horror-struck and paralyzed with fear. Orange continued to advance, though he knew his cause was hopeless ; while one by one the cities, which had declared for him so short a time before, now fell off. As in 1568, Alva refused to give battle ; and the prince was again forced to disband his army, in which, as before, a mutiny had broken out on account of arrears of pay. Mons was retaken by the Spaniards. The prince went to the province of Holland, the only one that remained true to him. Terrible indeed was the vengeance which Alva now prepared to take on the rebels. He declared that every city that refused a Spanish garrison should be besieged, and the inhabitants slaughtered. The southern provinces were soon crushed ; but the sea-coast provinces of Holland and Zealand held out for the prince. In the struggle that followed, between the power of the greatest kingdom of Europe and the few small islands and the strip of coast that constitute the provinces of Zealand and Holland, such deeds of daring and valour and heroism, such acts of cruelty and brutality were done, as can scarcely be equalled in the history of any other time or country. The two little provinces came out of the struggle weakened, impoverished, and well-nigh broken, but still free, and more than ever devoted to "Father William," as the people called the prince, who had been in their midst

through it all, and had done everything which the untiring thought and industry of one man could do.

It was he, even when he was lying sick of a fever, who was the means of saving Leyden from the enemy. The town was closely besieged by the Spaniards; the citizens were defending it bravely, but were almost reduced to starvation. The only person to whom they could look for help was William of Orange, who was lying sick at Rotterdam without an army, and almost without support, his two brothers, Count Louis and Count Henry, having died in battle some three or four months before. He had still his fleet of "Water Beggars," which had won more than one victory over the Spaniards; but of what use was a fleet for the relief of a town fifteen miles from the sea? He resolved to send the sea to Leyden. On the 3rd of August, he had the outer dikes pierced in several places, and the sea began to pour over the low land. But would it reach Leyden? Day after day, the people looked out, half hopefully, half despairingly, from the city tower; and still they saw no signs. They wrote in their despair that they could not hold out much longer, and from his sick-bed the prince wrote back words of hope. On the 1st of September, the little fleet arrived from Zealand, and began to sail inwards toward the city; but three great dikes remained to be broken down before the sea could reach Leyden, and these were defended by the Spaniards, as were also the villages that lay between them. One by one the dikes were carried by the little fleet, and the ships swept on, winding their way amid orchards and villages. But before the last barrier was passed the sea had sunk to the depth of some nine inches, and advance was impossible. If only a gale would blow

Relief of
Leyden,
1574.

from the north-west the water would rise. But the weather-cocks pointed steadily east during some terrible days; while the citizens, reduced to eating every kind of vermin, were dying of starvation in hundreds, and the Spaniards were shouting to them in derision that the prince could as well pluck the stars from the sky as bring the ocean to their walls. But on the night of the 1st October a great gale blew from the north-west; the waters rolled inwards, bearing the little fleet. A naval battle was fought among chimney-stacks and branches of trees. The Zealanders were victorious; the Spaniards fled, hundreds being drowned in the advancing sea. Leyden was saved.

Meantime, Alva had left a country where the hatred of the inhabitants was so intense that he himself felt it and suffered from it. His parting boast was that more than eighteen thousand persons had been executed by his orders! His successor, Requesens, was much embarrassed by the enormous debts which the war had accumulated. The expenses had been so great that even the wealth of Spain could not meet them; and the army mutinied because they were tired of being paid with promises. Requesens died early in 1576, just before the mutiny reached its height—before a mass of some three thousand armed men broke away from their leaders and rolled through the country, plundering every village in their way, and killing all who opposed them. Antwerp, the richest city in Europe, offered some resistance; it was carried by storm, and for days there raged what is known as the “Spanish Fury”—the soldiers, mad for gold, plundered, tortured, slew to obtain it. About eight thousand people were slain, and six millions of money lost. Antwerp never quite recovered the loss.

**Alva leaves
the Nether-
lands, 1573.**

**The
“Spanish
Fury.”**

But the ever-watchful prince saw in the "Spanish Fury" a means of uniting the people of the Netherlands, who, though differing in their religious views and their political opinions, were all agreed in their hatred of the Spanish army. He wrote countless letters to influential people, as well as papers for circulation, urging by means of the most skilful arguments the union of all the seventeen states to expel the Spanish army, and to protect their ancient rights. The result was that deputies from the different states met at Ghent and signed a document, which the prince had drawn up, known as the Pacification of Ghent. By this treaty the seventeen states agreed to unite together to expel the Spanish soldiers; Holland and Zealand were to continue to uphold the Reformed religion; while in the fifteen Catholic states the Protestants were to be permitted the liberty of worshipping as they chose.

**Pacification
of Ghent,
1576.**

Unfortunately, this union, though so well planned, was not to last. It was gradually broken up, partly through jealousy of the prince on the part of the other nobles, and partly through the schemes of two able governors whom Philip sent in succession to the Netherlands. The first of these was his half-brother, Don John of Austria, a remarkably handsome, dashing, and chivalrous young soldier, who a few years before had gained great glory by a victory over the Turks at Lepanto. He hated the Netherlands, and had come there, not with the intention of staying, but with the hope of carrying out a romantic scheme he had in his mind. At that time Mary of Scotland was a prisoner in the hands of her cousin, the Queen of England. During the six years of her reign in Scotland, she had gradually, in spite of her

**Don John
of Austria,
1576.**

beauty and personal charm, lost the love and respect of her subjects by her headstrong wilfulness, and her opposition to the Reformed party; and by her marriage with the man who was more than suspected of being her husband's murderer, she had given rise to dark suspicions of her own guilt. Her constant refusal to abandon the supposed murderer had led to her being deposed and imprisoned; while her young son, afterwards James I. of England, was crowned King of Scotland. Though she had succeeded in making her escape

**Battle of
Langside,
1553.** from confinement, and had gathered an army around her, she was defeated by her subjects in a disastrous battle at Langside, and was forced to flee to England, there to beg for the protection of her rival Elizabeth. She had been some eight years a prisoner in England when Don John formed the scheme of sailing over there, where he was to dethrone Elizabeth, marry Mary, and in her right rule as King of England and Scotland. But he was never allowed to set sail from the Netherlands, as he had intended doing; and he died rather miserably in 1578.

His successor as governor was his nephew, Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, the son of that Margaret of

**The Prince
of Parma,** Parma who had been regent of the Netherlands at the time when the troubles began.

1578. The Prince of Parma was not only one of the most skilful generals of his time, but was an able politician as well, capable of employing intrigue and stratagem as well as arms. His policy was to *divide* the states; and by means of fighting, and scheming, and bribery he succeeded in recovering the southern provinces for the king. But through the skilful management of Orange, the seven northern provinces held together; and in 1579 they signed a treaty, known as the

Union of Utrecht, by which they solemnly bound themselves to help each other to drive out the foreign soldiers from the country, and to protect their ancient rights and liberties. Every man was to have liberty to worship God according to his own conscience. Two years later, these United Provinces, as they were called after the Union of Utrecht, solemnly declared their independence of Philip and abjured allegiance to him. He never regained the sovereignty he had lost by his tyranny, and the United Provinces afterwards developed into the Dutch republic. But at the time they disowned Philip, the states had no thought of becoming a republic; and at the suggestion of Orange, who wished to secure for them the protection of France against Spain, they elected the Duke of Anjou, brother of the King of France, as their sovereign. This prince, however, proved himself unworthy of the position. After having solemnly sworn to protect the rights and freedom of the states, he formed a scheme to bring them under the dominion of France, and to restore within them the Catholic religion. His plans, however, were easily defeated, and he retired to France, where he died.

Union of
Utrecht,
1579.

Declaration
of inde-
pendence,
1581.

Meantime, the Prince of Parma had done all in his power to induce Orange to abandon the Provinces, whose freedom he may be said to have brought about. Splendid bribes were offered to him—honours, and titles, and wealth, the restoration of his confiscated estates and of his eldest son, still a captive in Spain. When bribes failed, other means were tried to get rid of the man whom Parma felt to be the chief enemy of Spain in the Netherlands. A ban was published against him by order of King Philip, which declared William of Nassau a traitor to the

Ban
against
Orange.

king and an enemy to the human race, and forbade all faithful subjects to give him food or drink, fire or shelter. A sum of twenty-five thousand crowns was offered to his murderer, as well as pardon for any crime he might have committed, "however heinous."

In consequence of the ban, many attempts were made to assassinate the liberator of his country, and at length, in 1584, one was successful. As the prince was one day going up the stair of his own house in the little town of Delft, a young man, named Balthazar Gérard, who had obtained admission into the house on the plea of seeking a passport, suddenly darted out from a recess and shot him to the heart. As he fell into the arms of his master of the horse, the prince exclaimed, "O my God, have mercy on my soul! O my God, have mercy upon this poor people!"

Thus his last thought was for the people for whose freedom he had sacrificed all—wealth, and honours, and ease, and life itself.



COAST OF HOLLAND.

CHAPTER II.

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE—THE RISE OF ENGLAND'S NAVY.

DURING their heroic struggle with Spain, the Netherlands had had so far but little help from the Queen of Protestant England. Again and again the Prince of Orange had sent envoys to offer her the sovereignty of Holland and Zealand, and to ask for men and money; but, though it would have given her the greatest joy to see the pride of Philip humbled, she disliked the thought of aiding rebellious subjects in their revolt against their lawful sovereign, and besides she did not feel herself strong enough openly to defy the enormous power of Spain. She knew how weak her position really was, with Mary Stuart a prisoner in her hands—Mary Stuart, once the queen of two countries. She knew how helpless she would be, with her weak army and navy, if she were to be attacked by France and Scotland aided by the Catholics in England itself; she knew how her Protestantism exposed her to the hatred of that bigoted Catholic, King Philip, as well as to the enmity of the pope. During the earlier part of her reign, she lived in the midst of constant dangers of open attacks and secret plots on the part of France and Scotland, Spain and Rome, and even of her own Catholic subjects. In 1569,

Queen
Elizabeth
and the
Nether-
landers.

Her
position.

there was a rising of the Catholics of the north of England, headed by the Earl of Northumberland; in 1570, Elizabeth was excommunicated by the pope; and in 1571, her life was threatened by the celebrated Ridolfi plot, in which the pope, as well as King Philip and Alva, were concerned, the object of which was to place Mary Stuart on the throne of England and Scotland, and to restore the Catholic religion in the island of Great Britain. Surrounded by such dangers as these, Elizabeth adopted the cautious policy of trying to keep all

Her policy. the different powers and parties on friendly terms without committing herself to any of them, while by thrifty government she did all in her power to increase the wealth and prosperity of her country. So when the Netherland envoys came to her, she received them with smiles and encouraging words and promises, but not till 1578 did she feel herself strong enough to send them troops. Six years before, she had unintentionally hastened the foundation of the Dutch republic by driving from her harbours, at the bidding of Alva, the little fleet of "Beggars of the Sea," which, in desperation for want of provisions, sailed across to Zealand and took the town of Brille.

At the very moment, however, when she was driving the fleet of "the Beggars" from her ports, she was secretly conniving at, if not encouraging, an adventurous attack which was preparing in the harbour of Plymouth against the possessions of the King of Spain in the New World. Though not daring openly to oppose the greatest power in Europe, she was always glad when a blow could be struck against it without compromising her.

It is quite uncertain whether she gave any help to the little expedition that set out from her harbour of Plymouth in May of that year so full of important

events—the year of the massacre of St. Bartholomew and of the foundation of Dutch independence. Drake's expedition, 1572.
 The expedition consisted of only two vessels, well fitted out, under the command of Francis Drake, who was already pretty well known to the Spaniards as a sea robber.

The story of Drake's life is as wonderful as any tale of romance. From his early childhood his home had been on shipboard. When he was little more than a baby, his parents, who were staunch Protestants, had been forced by a rising of Catholics in their neighbourhood to fly from their comfortable home near Tavistock; and through the influence of some relatives, Edmund Drake, the father, obtained the post of reader of prayers to the royal navy, the ships of which, when not in service, had their anchorage at Chatham. His early life. One of the old disused vessels became the home of the family; and here the future admiral was brought up, while one after another his younger brothers were born, most of whom were afterwards to die at sea. When Queen Mary came to the throne in 1553, Edmund Drake lost his appointment, and was forced to apprentice his son Francis to the captain of a small ship that traded with France and Holland. So pleased was the captain with his apprentice that he left him the ship by will; and for a while Drake carried on the trade with Holland on his own account, till, in 1564, the trade was stopped by Spain seizing every English vessel she could, in consequence of England having given harbour to the Protestant roving ships that did so much damage to those of Catholic nations. Drake now sold his ship, and entered the service of his relatives, the Hawkinses, a family whose name is well known in connection with maritime adventures. He made more than one voyage

under John Hawkins, who was engaged in the slave trade with America. The natives of America were not a strong race, and they were rapidly dying out under the hard work which the Spaniards forced them to do in the mines; so, early in the century, it became the practice to ship numbers of the powerful negroes of Africa to the New World. Even very good men approved of the practice at that time, because it spared the delicate natives of the West Indies, and removed the negroes from their swampy, unwholesome country to a much finer climate.

The slave trade.

In 1567—the year when Alva was beginning his terrible work of persecution in the Netherlands—Drake had accompanied John Hawkins in a very important expedition, to which Elizabeth had lent two of the ships of her navy. Without taking an open share, she was often really a sort of partner in the company that sent out these expeditions, lending her ships, and expecting a large share of the profits. On this occasion the profits were good. Hawkins had sold his shipload of five hundred negroes to great advantage to the Spaniards in some of the New World settlements, and was returning home, his vessels laden with gold and pearls, when he was overtaken by a great storm, which forced him to take refuge in the harbour of Vera Cruz—almost the very place where the conqueror of Mexico had landed nearly fifty years before. The Viceroy of Mexico, after giving his sacred promise that they should be unmolested, made a sudden attack on the English while they were repairing their ships, all of which, except two, were rendered useless, and the treasure sunk. Drake never forgot this act of treachery, which helped to strengthen the deep hatred of Spain which, like other staunch Protestants of the time, he had felt from his boyhood.

Hawkins's expedition.



It was in 1569 that he returned from that voyage, and three years later, as we have seen, he was setting out with a small expedition of his own for the Spanish Main, as the north coast of South America was called. During these three years he had twice made a voyage to Spanish America, had made himself familiar with its coasts and bays and harbours, and had earned a reputation among the Spaniards for skill and daring and mercifulness. After these two voyages, he came home with a poor opinion of the strength of the Spanish colonies, and with a bold scheme in his head, which this expedition of 1572 was to carry out. It was

**Drake's
scheme.**

nothing less than to attack Nombre de Dios, a town as large as Plymouth, where the treasure gathered from the mines of the New World was stored before being shipped to Spain, and to attempt to carry off the treasure! No modest attempt for two small vessels manned by seventy-three men and boys!

In a land-locked bay in the Gulf of Darien, which he had discovered on a former voyage, he put together

**The attack
on Nombre
de Dios.**

three pinnaces which he had brought with him in pieces, and in these and a shallop he started for his daring attack, leaving the ships within shelter of some islands, under the charge of an English pirate, named Ranse, who had joined him. The pinnaces dashed into the harbour of Nombre de Dios before the dawn, and while twelve men remained to guard them, the rest (sixty-one in all) sprang ashore, seized the shore battery, and hurled the guns into the sand. They then advanced to the market-place, where, after a short struggle, they put to flight a considerable body of Spaniards. But alarming rumours spread among the small band of English, and a sudden deluge of rain did damage to their weapons. The men were seized

with a nervous panic. Drake had led them to the king's treasure-house, and was cheerily urging them to burst it open, when he suddenly fell in a faint from loss of blood caused by a wound in his leg, and the men carried him to his pinnace.

The attack on Nombre de Dios had failed in its object, but Drake was not defeated yet. For the next few months, while he was preparing his plans, he lived a life such as every schoolboy dreams. In a creek in the Gulf of Darien, unknown to all save himself, the vessels were drawn up, and the men were employed in repairing them, and in fishing and hunting. So plentiful were the fish and game that they called the place **Port Plenty**. From this retreat they would sometimes dash out and seize a provision ship belonging to Spain; at other times they would suddenly appear where they were least expected, and empty one of the store-houses that the Spaniards had placed at intervals along the coast and among the islands for the use of the treasure fleet. The name of Drake, or "El Draque" (the Dragon) as the Spaniards called him, had become a terror throughout the Spanish seas, though there were many stories told of his mercy to his prisoners—of how, instead of killing them, as the Spanish custom was, he would set them free, and even give them a vessel to go in.

It was February of 1573 when he was ready for his next attempt. The treasure from the mines of Peru was brought from Panama, on the shores of the Pacific, across the Isthmus of Darien to Nombre de Dios, on the coast of the Atlantic, whence the Plate fleet bore it to Spain. Drake had resolved to seize the treasure on its way across the isthmus; and with this end in view he had secured the friendship of the Maroons, as the English called the

A daring
scheme.

fierce and powerful people who inhabited the district. Meantime a terrible sickness had broken out among the men in Port Plenty. Several had died—among them, Drake's brother Joseph—and many were invalided. Only some eighteen English could accompany the expedition. Besides these were a few French Huguenots belonging to a pirate vessel which Drake had come across in one of his adventures, and some thirty Maroons. Guided by the Maroons, this small force journeyed inland across the isthmus, through the tropical forest, with its brilliant-hued flowers, its luscious fruits, its parti-coloured birds. When they reached one of the strongholds of the Maroons, Drake could not go on without first trying to convert the people, and to induce

Drake them to fling away their idols, as Cortez had
converts the done in the cities of Mexico more than fifty
Maroons. years before. But the faith from which Drake sought to convert them was that which Cortez had tried to teach—no doubt in a degraded form—and the idol he induced them to fling away was the cross which Cortez had laboured to set up! Thus did the purer faith succeed the less pure. Before he left the stronghold, the bluff, daring English pirate and Puritan had taught these fierce and ignorant savages to say the Lord's Prayer like children. Then once more the little band of adventurers continued their march through the forest, till they reached the summit of the slope towards the Atlantic, and there, from the branches of a great tree, Drake gazed upon the Pacific—on the mysterious ocean of the West, on which no Englishman had ever looked before—and as he gazed in a sort of ecstasy, he prayed God to grant that he might live to make one voyage in an English ship upon its waters; and, coming down, he told his comrades of his prayer.

A few days later, they came in sight of the harbour of Panama, in which the gold-laden ships were riding at anchor. The daring little band concealed themselves in the tall grass that grew on each side of the road along which the treasure would be carried to Nombre de Dios. But the first attempt to seize it was a failure; for an alarm had spread among the Spaniards that "El Draque" was near, and when the English waylaid the train of mules that carried the treasure, they found the packs empty of gold. Drake avenged himself by attacking and plundering the half-way town of Venta Cruz; and then he returned to his pinnaces, which were again heard of in unexpected places, seizing vessels and plundering store-houses. One night, some weeks later, the train of mules laden with the rich treasure was nearing Nombre de Dios, when suddenly from the tall grass on the sides of the road there sprang upon it dark figures of armed men, shouting war-cries in English, French, and Maroon. It was "El Draque" and his band of adventurers, who soon made themselves masters of the train, and rifled the packs of the gold and silver and jewels they contained in great quantities. Drake had now carried out the object of his expedition, and on a Sunday in August 1573 he again put into Plymouth harbour, his vessels laden with the plunder of Nombre de Dios and Venta Cruz, and of countless Spanish ships, as well as with the contents of the mule packs.

Success.

Drake
returns
home.

So far was Drake from being received as a hero by the queen that he was forced to lie hid for some time, for fear of being hanged as a pirate to appease the anger of Spain, which was now on a friendly footing with England. The Spanish ambassador complained to the queen of the attacks which had

In hiding.

been made by English subjects on the Spanish colonies, and Drake dared not show his face for a while. It was not till more than four years after his return home that he was able once more to put to sea, this time on an expedition which he had been burning to carry out ever since the day when, from the branches of the tree in Darien, he had looked out upon the boundless waters of the mysterious South Sea, as the Pacific was called. During these years, while he was forced to lie idle, he had seen one vessel after another set out for the West; for his success had awoke the ambition and the spirit of daring of the seafaring men of England, as well as the avarice of the merchants.

Meantime, the relations between England and Spain had become less friendly. Some rumour had reached

England and Spain in 1576. England of the romantic scheme of the hand-some young brother of Philip, Don John of

Austria, to wed Mary Stuart, put Elizabeth to death, and make himself king of England and Scotland; and, besides this, one of the best English merchant ships had been seized in a Spanish port, and the crew thrown into the dungeons of the Inquisition. War with Spain seemed almost unavoidable. The queen sent for Drake, questioned him about his schemes, and told him she would have need of his services to avenge her on Spain; but before he could start, with one of those sudden changes of purpose from which all her ministers suffered so much, she had withdrawn her consent to the expedition. However, she changed her mind

Drake's expedition to the South Seas, 1577.

again, and in November 1577 he was able to set out from Plymouth with a little fleet of some five ships. These were fitted out in the best style; for shares had been taken in the expedition by many nobles and wealthy gentlemen, who ex-

pected to get a good return for their money, and many younger sons of noble families had joined as volunteers. About a year before, Frobisher, who has given his name to an inlet in North America, had returned to England from his attempt to find a passage from the Atlantic to the South Sea by the north-west, bringing with him some gold from Labrador; and all the young men of England were wild to make their fortunes by discoveries in the far West. Spain and Portugal had had it very much their own way in the New World so far; but this was to be no longer—the adventurous spirit of the old Norse vikings had come to life in their descendants, the English.

Drake's scheme, which was kept secret before his setting out, was to sail from the Atlantic into the Pacific, and attack the Spanish ports on the coasts of Chili and Peru, from which the gold from the mines was shipped to Panama. As we have seen, the Spaniards were in the habit of transporting the treasure *overland* from Panama to the coast of the Atlantic; for in those days it was believed that the continent of South America stretched to the South Pole, and that the only passage on the south between the two oceans was the narrow stormy strait which had been discovered in 1520 by the Portuguese Magellan, whose name it still bears. Now, this strait was looked upon by sailors with the same superstitious terror with which the Atlantic had been regarded by all Europe before Columbus sailed across it. Yet it was through this passage that Drake had resolved to sail.

Drake's
scheme.

About seven months after setting out, the little storm-tossed fleet reached the shelter of a natural harbour at the entrance to the strait; and here the travellers came upon the first sign of Christian man which they had seen for many weary weeks while they ploughed their

way southwards, buffeted by fierce storms. It was the gallows on which, nearly sixty years before, Drake reaches the Strait of Magellan, 1578. Magellan had hanged two officers of his fleet, whom terror of the storm-haunted strait had driven to mutiny. At the foot of the gallows their bones were found buried. Per-

haps it was this sight that decided Drake to take the step he now took. On board his fleet was a man who, throughout the voyage, had never ceased trying to stir up mutiny. This man was Thomas Doughty, an intimate friend of Drake, who, intrusted with the secret of Drake's plans for the voyage, had betrayed it to the queen's great minister, Lord Burleigh, from whom she had ordered that it was to be kept hidden. Perhaps it was in obedience to Lord Burleigh's directions that he had done all in his power to make the expedition a failure. Drake, knowing nothing of his friend's treachery, had first believed in him; then reprimanded him for insubordination; then punished him by having him tied to the mast. Now, on that lonely savage shore, in sight of Magellan's gallows, he had him tried for mutiny and treason by a council of the officers of the fleet. They found him guilty. Two days later, a rude altar

and a block were set up side by side, and Execution of Doughty. near them tables were spread for a feast.

Drake and his former friend, kneeling before the altar, together received the sacrament; then Doughty partook of his farewell feast with the comrades who had condemned him to death; and when it was ended, he took his leave of them all with jests upon his lips, embraced the man he had betrayed, and laid his head upon the block.

Drake having, by this stern act, asserted the absolute authority of the captain over all on board his ship, set

sail through the terrible strait. After a fortnight of battling with fierce winds, the vessels, now reduced to three, came out upon the ocean over which Drake had longed to sail. But here a terrible storm swept down upon them and bore them southwards: one vessel went down with all hands, and one went homewards through the strait. But Drake's ship was driven to the south of Cape Horn, and there he made the great discovery that the Atlantic and the Pacific were really parts of one great ocean. When the storm ceased, he landed on the southernmost island at the cape; and in his joy at his discovery embraced the earth, as Columbus had kissed the sand of the first shore on which he landed in the west. So strangely history repeats itself. Then northward along the coasts of Chili and Peru sped the single English ship with its daring captain and crew, seizing the vessels and plundering the ports of the panic-stricken Spaniards, to whom "El Draque's" ship seemed to have fallen from the skies.

Drake's discovery.

He plunders Chili and Peru.

About three years after the expedition had set out, the *Golden Hind*, as Drake had named his vessel, entered Plymouth harbour, almost sinking under her precious load of silver and gold and jewels, after having sailed across the whole breadth of the Pacific, and past the Cape of Good Hope, thus accomplishing the voyage round the world.

His return home, 1580.

Before his arrival, news of Drake's exploits had reached the queen through the indignant remonstrances of the Spanish ambassador; and for a time it seemed as if he, or at least his spoil, must be given up as a peace-offering to Spain. But the very week after his return a force of Spaniards landed in Ireland to help the Catholics there, who, stirred up by the pope, and

headed by the Earl of Desmond, had broken out into open rebellion. That saved the "little pirate." **He is knighted,** Instead of being handed over to Spain, he **1581.** was knighted by the queen herself on board the *Golden Hind*; and what with his riches, and the glory of his achievements, he became the hero of the time in England.

He was not long at home till he had planned another bold stroke. About this time, Philip had seized the vacant throne of Portugal, to which he laid claim through his mother. One of the possessions of Portugal in the Azores refused to acknowledge him as sovereign, and Drake proposed to take it in the name of the other claimant of the Portuguese crown, Don Antonio. The island lay on the very route by which the Spanish trading fleets returned home laden with gold and merchandise; and Drake saw how, if he held possession of it, he could ruin the trade of Spain. It is perhaps

The uses of a navy. Drake's greatest glory that he was the first man of his day to see the uses to which a navy could be turned. In those times, the navy held a very inferior position to the army, and was used merely to ship troops across the sea and to attack the enemy's coast. But Drake saw that its great use was to *hold the seas*, and to destroy the enemy's trade. Unfortunately, he was not allowed on this occasion to carry out his idea: after the queen had given her consent to the expedition, and the preparations were well advanced, she suddenly changed her mind, and refused to let Drake leave the country.

Fuming with impatience, he was forced to stay at home, while other adventurers, more lucky than he, departed on roving expeditions. Amongst others, the famous Sir Walter Raleigh set out about this time to

found his colony of Virginia, on the coast of North America. But at length, in 1585, the Dragon, as Drake was called, was again let loose. In the beginning of this year, Philip had formed, with the Guise family in France, the famous League, by which they bound themselves to prevent a Protestant becoming King of France; and Elizabeth felt that an alliance of her enemies was dangerous to her. To keep Philip employed on the other side of the Channel, she agreed to send a force of men, under her favourite the Earl of Leicester, to aid the Protestants in the Netherlands; and about the same time, she gave Drake permission to equip an expedition against the Spanish ports in the West Indies.

Virginia
founded,
1584.

Leicester in
the Nether-
lands.

Leicester accomplished nothing in the Netherlands, and the life of Sir Philip Sidney, one of the noblest, most gifted, and most accomplished men of his day, was sacrificed in vain. We all know the story of how, when some water was brought to him, as he lay mortally wounded on the battle-field of Zutphen, he gave it up to a wounded soldier lying near him, saying, "Thy necessity is greater than mine."

Sir Philip
Sidney.

But if Leicester accomplished nothing, Drake carried out brilliantly the expedition intrusted to him. Not as a mere pirate this time, but as the admiral of a small war fleet, on board which was a little force of military, he sailed across the Atlantic, took San Domingo, the town of which Columbus had laid the foundations in the island of Hispaniola nearly a hundred years before, plundered it, and sank the vessels in its harbour. Then on to Cartagena, the chief town of the Spanish Main, which he also took and plundered. In about a year after he set out, he was being received in triumph at home. Such was the

Drake's
triumphs.

effect of his exploits on the trade of Spain, that the Bank of Seville failed, and the king could hardly raise a loan.

Drake was hardly at home when he was longing to be at sea again. He had learned that the best way to carry on war at sea was to attack the enemy's trade; he felt sure that Spain could best be weakened in that way. But Elizabeth wanted him at home to defend the

narrow seas. Another great Catholic plot, **The Babington plot.** the Babington plot, had just been discovered; so called from Anthony Babington, an English

Catholic, who was to assassinate the queen, while at the same time a great fleet was to sail from Spain, and with the splendid army of the Prince of Parma in the Netherlands, was to attack and conquer England. Mary Stuart was then to be married to the Prince of Parma, and to be placed on the throne of England and Scotland; and all Europe was once more to be restored to the Catholic faith.

Babington and his accomplices were put to death; but the huge Spanish fleet, or Armada, as it was called, was still preparing in the harbours of Spain, and Mary Stuart, the centre of endless plots in France, Scotland, Spain, and England itself, was still alive.

**Elizabeth
and Mary
Stuart.**

Elizabeth's ministers now urged the execution of Mary, who was found to have been corresponding with Babington. For long Elizabeth hesitated. No doubt she would have been glad to be rid of Mary, but she could not at once bring herself to put to death one who was a queen, a kinswoman, and a guest. At length, when proofs of Mary's share in the Babington plot were laid before her, she did the act which history regards as her one crime—she signed the death-warrant of her rival. But surely, if it is justifiable to take the

life of another in self-defence, Elizabeth was justified in putting to death one by whom not only her own life was endangered, but the lives of her faithful subjects, and the very existence of the purer faith which she upheld.

Early in 1587, Mary Stuart was beheaded in Fotheringay Castle, after undergoing a solemn trial. In the brave and dignified manner in which she met her death, she showed a nobler side of her character than she had ever done during her unhappy life. In spite of the many charms which she possessed—her beauty and fascination, her wit and accomplishments—she had many faults which were serious in a monarch. She was above all a woman, a Papist, and a Stuart; impulsive and emotional, ready to sacrifice the gravest interests to the desire of her own heart; deceitful, subtle, and scheming; self-willed and obstinate, and possessed of that belief in the divine right of kings to do whatever they like which brought her unfortunate grandson, Charles I., to the block. Elizabeth was not perhaps an admirable character, but she was always ready to sacrifice her personal inclination to the welfare of her subjects; and she had her reward in the splendid prosperity which England reached in her reign.

Shortly after the execution of Mary, Drake had again been allowed to set out on an expedition against Spain. This time his attack was to be made, not on the colonies, but on the vessels of the great Armada which were preparing in the Spanish ports. He vowed he would “sing King Philip’s beard,” and well he kept his vow. He sailed into Cadiz harbour, which was crowded with ships for the Armada; defeated the galleys that advanced against him; and seized, plundered, and destroyed a large number of

Mary’s
execution,
1587.

Drake’s
attack on
Cadiz.

vessels. In a month or two he was back again in England, bringing with him as a prize the *San Philippe*, the largest merchant vessel in the world, which he had seized on its way home from the East Indies, laden with an almost priceless cargo. Such was the effect of these daring deeds on the superstitious minds of the Spaniards that they declared that "El Draque" was a magician, and wonderful tales of his witchcraft went round in whispers. At the same time, King Philip had been so entirely robbed of the awe that used to surround the greatest monarch in the world, that, as the story goes, when he asked a lady to go with him for a sail, she refused, saying she feared "El Draque" might carry her off!

But Philip was preparing a terrible vengeance against the "little pirate" and his heretic queen. The great Armada, the largest fleet the world had ever seen, was nearly ready to swoop down upon England, and land on its shores the finest army in Europe—the tried troops of the Prince of Parma. All knew that if the prince were once to set foot on the island, the conquest of England was as good as accomplished. It was but little the half-trained troops, the raw recruits and volunteers, which were all she could muster, could do to defend her against the veteran forces of Spain, supported by the Scots in the north. And the conquest of England by Spain meant the conquest of Protestantism, of freedom, of enlightenment; it meant the restoring of the dark ages, the undoing of all that the Reformation and the Renaissance had done. In the Armada there sailed three hundred Catholic priests and officers of the Inquisition, with thumbscrews and other implements of torture for the conversion of the English. Perhaps

The Armada.

**Importance
of the crisis.**

there had not been in history a moment so important as this since the time when the little band of Greeks gathered themselves together on the Plain of Marathon to resist the hosts of Persia.

During the spring and early summer months of 1588, while the people of England, in an agony of suspense, were waiting the coming of the dreaded Armada, Drake was suffering tortures of impatience and disappointment. He saw clearly that the best **Drake's plan.** tactics of the English navy were to attack the different portions of the Armada before they were united together; and his experience at Cadiz had shown him how easy it would be, by taking up his position with a small fleet to the windward of a Spanish port, to attack and destroy the vessels as they sailed out of harbour. But the queen's orders were that the navy was to guard the Channel. Oftener than once, indeed, during these weary months, Drake's arguments had won her consent to his plans; but before he could set sail to startle Spain by one of his sudden bold attacks, he was always recalled, and like the watch-dog that tugs helplessly at its chain, as it hears the footsteps of the thief approach its master's house, Drake could only fret and fume in the bitterness of his disappointment as he thought of all the golden opportunities he was missing, while the vessels of the Armada drew together for the attack. And though England was saved after all, there can be no doubt that Elizabeth would have acted more wisely had she unchained her watch-dog.

So the Armada was allowed to enter the Channel without a shot being fired, and to sail towards Dunkirk, where it was to be joined by the army of **The Armada in the Channel.** the Prince of Parma. Drake, who held the position of lieutenant to the admiral, Lord

Howard, urged by every argument in his power an immediate attack on the Armada before it could be joined by the Prince of Parma; but part of the English fleet was engaged in blocking Dunkirk to prevent the Prince of Parma from getting out, and Lord Howard would not engage until he had all his forces together. So for about a week the English hung upon the skirts of the huge Spanish fleet, and many small skirmishing engagements took place, and some prizes were seized. But when at length the Armada anchored off Calais, the English, roused by their danger, drove them from their moorings by means of fire-ships, and then, before the unwieldy Spanish galleons and galliasses had recovered from their fright and formed into order, the nimble English ships swooped down upon them. For hours a fierce sea-battle raged off the coast of Gravelines, and Drake's ship, the *Revenge*, was ever in the thickest of

the fight. The great Armada was forced to retreat. A fierce storm burst upon it, and dashed its ships on the coasts of Norway, and Ireland, and the Hebrides. Only a mere remnant of the huge fleet, that had set out with such pride so short a while before, returned to the harbours of Spain. Beneath the windows of the admiral's house, as the story goes, the Spanish boys would cry in mockery, "Drake is coming! Drake is coming!"

England was saved from the greatest danger that ever threatened her before; and the mighty shout of joy, that went up from the hearts of the people, awoke the spirit of the nation, as the victories over Persia had aroused all the genius of Greece. In the years that followed, some of the finest works were written that the world has ever seen. It was then that the English drama rose;

Defeat of the
Armada.

Effects on
England.

it was then that Spenser wrote his "Faery Queen;" it was then that there lived in England the man who, in all the countries of the world, in all the ages of its history, has no equal in the art of making human beings live, and speak, and act before our eyes—Shakespeare.

The dark shadow, which fear of the enormous power of Spain had thrown over men's minds and hearts, was lifted. Spain was seen to be weaker than was thought; and the man who had done most to prove this was the "little pirate," Francis Drake. For a while he was the hero of the day; but this glory did not last. A few months after the defeat of the Armada, in 1589, he was sent with a small fleet, and some troops under the command of Sir John Norris, to endeavour to place Don Antonio on the throne of Portugal, of which King Philip had deprived him. The Portuguese did not come to the support of Don Antonio, as was expected; a terrible sickness broke out among the English sailors; and the expedition was a failure. And though Drake and Norris succeeded in taking the town of Corunna, in the north of Spain, in defeating a Spanish army on land, and in seizing and plundering about a hundred vessels, all this was not enough to prevent the enemies of Drake from bringing him into disgrace with the queen. Under the shadow of this disgrace he lived at home through many years, during which many another adventurer, filled with the spirit of daring which he had aroused, set out to win glory on the sea. With bitterness of heart, he watched them go, one by one, while he remained; he saw the *Revenge*, which he had made famous, depart on her last voyage, with another captain's flag streaming from the mast; and he heard the story of

Drake's
expedition
to Portugal.

Loss of the
"Revenge."

her last fight with the fifty-three great vessels of Spain
—of how

“The sun went down, and the stars came out, far over the summer sea ;
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three ;”

and how she “went down by the island crags.” And the old admiral must have grieved for her loss as though she had been a living thing.

One more chance he was to have—his last. Philip was preparing a new Armada. In alarm, Elizabeth resolved to let loose her Dragon once again ;
Drake's last voyage. and the merchants of Spain trembled. But fortune did not favour him as of old : one disappointment after another awaited him in the West, where he used to carry all before him ; and while he was preparing for an attack on the gold towns of Central America, he was seized with sickness,
His death, 1596. and died. Amid the roar of cannon, his men lowered the body of their admiral into the sea on which he had gained so many splendid victories.

So the terror of Spain was no more ; but he had taught his countrymen the lesson which was to make them in time the greatest nation in the world. He had taught them the use of a navy, and what it meant to *hold the seas*.



MEDAL OF THE ARMADA.

CHAPTER III.

HENRY OF NAVARRE—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS STRUGGLE IN FRANCE.

ON that terrible day in August 1572, when, by the command of the King of France, thousands of Protestants were butchered in Paris, the lives of two Protestant princes, by the same command, were spared. One of these was Henry, the young King of Navarre. Though at this time only some nineteen years old, he was already looked to by the Protestants of France as their leader, in consequence of his high birth and his early training. Through his father, Anthony of Bourbon, he was descended from Louis IX. of France, and he was heir to the throne after the reigning family; while it was from his mother, Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre, that he had inherited, not only his little kingdom on the borders of France and Spain, but also his intellect, his nobility of character, and his leaning to Protestantism. For Jeanne d'Albret was the worthy daughter of the celebrated Margaret, Queen of Navarre, sister of Francis I., who is distinguished, not only for her learning and her liberal-minded views of religion, but also as an author, and as the wise and faithful counsellor of her brother, the King of France, in many grave affairs of state. At the time when religious persecution began in France, her

*Genealogy
of Henry.*

little court was often a refuge for exiles of the Reformed faith, which she herself favoured, though she was perhaps never quite in all points a Protestant. She did not live to see her grandson Henry, who no doubt resembled her in many respects; but a story is told of the joy of her husband, the King of Navarre, on the birth of the child in his castle among the mountains at Pau, and of how he took the new-born babe in his arms and kissed it, and held to its nostrils a cup of the golden wine of the country, prophesying that it would grow up to be a worthy descendant of the mountain race from which it was sprung.

With no dream that he would ever come to the throne of France, Jeanne d'Albret brought up her son in a way fitted to make him hardy, brave,

**His bring-
ing up.**

and a Prot-
estant. As

a boy, he ran wild among the mountains with other boys of his own age, bare-headed and bare-footed; and his mother herself taught him to sing the Psalms, and had him educated by a Protestant tutor. When he was about fifteen, she took him to Rochelle, the chief Protestant town in France, where, in re-

ply to the stately speech with which he was welcomed, he is said to have remarked, "I do not know how to



speak as well as you, but I assure you that I will act better than I speak." This was in 1568, the year after Alva had led his army into the Netherlands, to crush the rebellious Protestants there; the year before the Huguenots in France were defeated by the Catholic party at Jarnac, where their leader, the Prince of Condé, fell. After his death, Henry of Navarre, who was his nephew, was looked on as the head of the Huguenots, though the real leader of the party was of course Coligny.

Position
of the
Huguenots.

It was now, as may be remembered, that the Prince of Orange, who had just been defeated in his first unfortunate campaign in the Netherlands, came to France to help the Protestants, along with his two brothers; but he was called away by affairs at home before the next great battle between the two parties in France was fought. This was the battle of Moncontour, which took place only a few months after that of Jarnac, in October

Battle of
Moncontour,
1569.

1569. Young though he was, Henry of Navarre was present at the battle, which was lost to the Huguenots, chiefly, it is said, in consequence of the rash and impulsive attack led by Louis of Nassau, who, though brave and skilful as a general, was apt to be incautious. But so ably did Coligny manage the retreat that it scarcely seemed as if his troops had been defeated. The Huguenots fell back on Rochelle, where they gathered strength for another struggle. In the district round the town the people were almost all Protestants, and they regarded the young King of Navarre as their sovereign. A small fleet of vessels set out from the port, and cruised about in his name, as the "Beggars of the Sea" had done in that of William of Orange, seizing and plundering Catholic ships, and returning to Rochelle

laden with booty, which was sold for the benefit of the Huguenot chief, and for the support of the army.

In a few months, Coligny felt strong enough to lead an army towards Paris. The Catholic party did not feel ready to meet him without help from Spain; and there were many among the Catholics in whom jealousy of Spain was even stronger than enmity to the Huguenots, and who were most unwilling to give Philip a footing in France. So, in 1570, a new

**Treaty of
1570.**

treaty was agreed on between the two religious parties. We have seen before how

Coligny tried to make use of the peace to unite these parties by stirring up their common dislike of Spain, just as Philip had sought to keep them apart by working on the religious feeling of the Catholics; we have seen how the noble admiral had all but succeeded, through his influence over the young king, in bringing about a war with Spain, when his plans were suddenly cut short by the terrible massacre of August 1572.

**Marriage of
Henry to
Margaret of
Valois.**

One event which the peace had brought about was the marriage of Henry of Navarre to Margaret of Valois, sister of the king.

Great things were hoped by the lovers of peace from this marriage, which was regarded as the union of the two parties between which France was divided. But the bells that were rung in honour of the "Paris wedding" rang the death-knell as well of hundreds of innocent people, who, all unsuspecting of treachery, had come from the country to witness the ceremony!

It is hardly possible to realize the horror which Henry must have felt when he found himself, on that night of hideous slaughter, almost the only person spared amid the band of gallant brothers in arms and in faith who had

come to Paris undreaming of cause for fear ! We are told that at midnight, a few days after the massacre, he was roused from his bed by a summons from his brother-in-law, the king, who, it is said, loved him more than his own brothers. He found the king wild with terror : a strange confused sound of clashing arms, of groans and shrieks and curses—the mutterings of a mighty multitude rising in fierce wrath—had driven sleep from his eyes. And Henry, too, heard the sound ; and long years after, when the memory of it would at times return to him, he was seized with horror. Nor was this feeling of superstitious terror at the deed that had been done confined to the king : in the army that advanced against the Huguenots at Rochelle after the massacre, there were many brave soldiers who trembled at the thought that they were serving under the murderers of the noble admiral ; and when Henry of Guise played a game of chance with his comrades, to pass the dreary hours of waiting in camp, there were those who said they saw blood on the dice he threw.

The king's
nightmare.

The following year, peace was again made with the Huguenots, who were to have liberty to worship in their own way in four towns—Rochelle, Montauban, Sancerre, and Nismes. But at court there was no peace, but bitter feud—

Treaty of
1573.

brother against brother, and mother against son. The Duke of Alençon, the youngest brother of the king—he whom afterwards, as Duke of Anjou, the United Provinces chose as their sovereign—openly opposed his mother and brother, who were constantly haunted by the fear of assassination. The poor young king, who, though weak and passionate, was not without good in him, never recovered from the effects of the terrible



deed to which he had been driven by the arguments and taunts of the mother he had always obeyed too well. It is said that he never afterwards could meet another's eye, but cast his own upwards to the ceiling or down to the floor. The knowledge that he was looked upon by his fellow-creatures as a sort of monster of cruelty weighed upon his weak mind; the constant anxiety in which he was kept by the conspiracies going on around him wasted his sickly frame; and in 1574,

before he was quite twenty-four years of age, he died. The last words he spoke were, "My mother."

Charles was succeeded by his brother, under the title of Henry III. The new king differed greatly from his predecessor. He was not without intellect—when he cared to use it—but he was wholly given up to idleness, luxury, and frivolous pleasures. Unlike his brother, he did not care for manly exercise. Charles IX. would toil at a smith's forge, which had been erected for him, till the perspiration poured from his brow, and sometimes would mount his horse at midnight to be present at a hunt in the early morning. Henry III., on the other hand, would spend hours at his toilet, having a more than feminine love of dress and ornament, as well as of sweetmeats and luxuries of all sorts. He painted regularly, and wore jewels in his ears. Most of his favourites—and he surrounded himself with several—were chosen for their taste in dress and the splendour of their ornaments, as well as for their youth, gay spirits, and love of pleasure.

Death of
Charles IX.,
1574.

Henry III.

At the time of his brother's death he was in Poland, of which country he had been appointed king in 1573, but he at once returned to France. At first he took up a position very unfavourable to the Huguenots, causing it to be announced that he would tolerate no religious worship in the country but the Catholic. War was the result. It was put off for a while by negotiations, but it broke out in 1577. Henry of Navarre was once more with the Huguenots, having escaped from Paris in 1576. Four years he had lived there, since the massacre, a life that did dishonour to his early training—a life of idleness and frivolous pleasure. Perhaps the example of his wife, who though very beautiful and accomplished, was

Renewal of
religious
war, 1577.

far from being a good woman, may have been partly to blame, perhaps the attractions of the gayest city in the world were too much for the inexperienced young man of nineteen to resist; but his old servant knew that the young king had not quite forgotten the early lessons of his mother, for he heard him in the night time, when he thought himself alone, grieving bitterly over the errors into which he had fallen.

The war did not last. A treaty of peace was made at Poitiers between the king and the Huguenots on

Treaty of Poitiers, 1577. terms very favourable to the latter — so favourable, indeed, that the extreme Catholics

were indignant. Their indignation became alarm when, in 1584, the Duke of Anjou, the last surviving brother of the king, died. This prince, though himself a Catholic, had at times sided with the Huguenots, and had even taken up arms against his brother; for he belonged to a party in France, known as the Politicians, whose chief object was always to oppose Spain. On his death, the next heir to the throne of France was Henry of Navarre, for Henry III. had no children. It was the possibility of a Protestant becoming their king that alarmed the Guise family and the extreme Catholics, and induced them to form, with

The League, 1585. Philip of Spain, the celebrated League, by which they bound themselves to do all in

their power to prevent the crown of France from passing to a Protestant. It was the formation of this League, as will be remembered, that alarmed Elizabeth into sending an army to the assistance of the Netherlanders, and into once more letting Drake loose against the Spanish colonies. Had Henry III. been wise, he would have seen that his best policy was to throw in his lot with the Huguenots and the Politicians;

and, supported by England, and the United Provinces, the sovereignty of which was at this time offered to him, to oppose Philip of Spain, who was no doubt aiming at the government of France. Instead of doing this, after some hesitation, he joined the League.

Joined by
Henry III.

When the news reached Henry of Navarre that the king, with whom he was then on good terms, had taken the side of the Guise party, it fell upon him like a blow. He bowed his head for a while upon his hand, and when he raised it, a part of his hair had become gray! He was now a man of thirty-two, and was the recognized head of the Huguenots. During the nine years since he had left Paris, he had more than regained the good opinion which he had lost by his life of pleasure in that gay city.

Character of
Navarre.

His courage and military skill, his wisdom and tact, his good-humour and amiable manners, had won for him the highest respect and the affection of all who knew him. He was felt to be every inch a king, while Henry III. was despised even by those who remained faithful to him from a feeling of loyalty to the rightful sovereign of France.

After joining the League, the king issued an edict forbidding any form of worship in the country save the Catholic, and the Huguenots again took up arms. The war that followed was known as the "War of the three Henrys," from Henry III., Henry of Navarre, and Henry of Guise, each of whom commanded an army of his own.

War of
the three
Henrys,
1585.

The Germans and the Swiss sent troops to the assistance of the Huguenots; but the king prevented them from joining Navarre, against whom he sent an army under the Duke of Joyeuse, one of his favourites. It was

completely defeated at Coutras. For the first time since the beginning of their struggle, the Huguenots were victorious; and the victory filled them with faith in their leader and with high hopes of success, which were scarcely damped by the news of the defeat of their German allies by the army of Henry of Guise.

**Battle of
Coutras,
1587.**

Of the three Henrys, the king alone had not won a battle; but he had really put an end to the war by preventing the German and the Swiss troops from joining the army of the Huguenots, and by inducing the Swiss to withdraw from France. He was therefore surprised to find that he was received in Paris with the utmost coldness, while the smallest feat of Henry of Guise was rapturously applauded, and even celebrated in ballads. Since the massacre, the people of Paris had become quite fanatically Catholic; they looked upon it as the worst sin possible to grant any concessions to

**Popularity
of Henry
of Guise.**

heretics; and though Henry III. was in reality as sincere a Catholic as any man, he was disliked by the Parisians chiefly because he was thought to favour the Huguenots. Henry of Guise was their darling, their hero. He was a tall, fine-looking man, skilled in every sort of manly exercise, and capable of enduring almost any amount of fatigue and hardship; a brave soldier and a generous captain, willing always to share in camp the toils and hardships of the men, and to divide with them the glory and the prizes; courteous in his manners, and attentive to others. He was also ambitious, untruthful, and perhaps unscrupulous where his own objects were concerned; but these qualities were not seen by all. Throughout his life he had been a most consistent and extreme Catholic. Together with his mother and Henry III. (then Duke

of Anjou), he had arranged with Catherine de Medici for the murder of Coligny, and was himself present when the body of the noble admiral was flung from the window of his room into the courtyard below. He had afterwards become the head of the Catholic League in France; and the people of Paris had formed themselves into a powerful union to be ready to assist the League, if it should be necessary.

Not very long after the return of the king to Paris, on the conclusion of the war, the Parisians seemed to think the time had come to act. The unfortunate king, feeling himself surrounded in his own capital with enemies and plots, had forbidden Guise to come to Paris. In spite of the royal orders, Guise arrived in the city. The king summoned his Swiss guards to protect him. The citizens thinking, or pretending to think, that a massacre of the Catholics was intended, took up arms, barricaded the city, and drove the guards out of it. The king fled, and afterwards published an edict promising to destroy heresy, and calling on his subjects to take an oath never to own a heretic as king. Henry of Guise was made Lord High Steward of France. This was in 1588. It was now that Philip of Spain, finding things settled in France so favourably to his cause, thought he might venture to send out against England the Armada, which had been so long preparing.

Rising in
Paris, 1588.

While the English were rejoicing at their victory over Spain, France was torn asunder by party quarrels and party plots. The unhappy king, who was the least powerful of the three party leaders in France, felt his authority weakened on every side, and thought that his life, too, was threatened by Guise. He resolved, as he said himself, "rather to allow him to be killed than to

wait until he killed me." In December 1588, Guise was assassinated by the king's guards as he was coming into the presence of the king. In the room below that in which the deed was done Catherine de Medici was dying.

Assassina-
tion of Guise.

This act, of course, led to open war between Henry III. and the League. The people of Paris, wild with rage, refused any longer to acknowledge him as their king, and their example was followed by many other great cities; while the Duke of Mayenne, brother of the murdered Guise, led an army against Henry.

War with
the League.

The king could not possibly have held out alone against the League; but Henry of Navarre now marched with an army to his assistance. The two kings met in the park of Plessis-le-Tours; and we are told that when Navarre once more met face to face in peace the sovereign against whom he had carried arms, great tears rolled down his cheeks. He believed sincerely that kings rule by the will of God, and that their subjects are bound to obey them; and his faith in his own right to succeed to the throne of France was almost a religion. It was the denial of that right that had made him take up arms against his rightful monarch. Now, he was rejoiced to be able to return to his allegiance; and while he excused the murder of Guise on the ground that he had been a traitor, Henry III., for his part, announced his opinion that it was wrong to call Huguenots heretics.

Very soon the king was at the head of an army of forty thousand men, for the Swiss joined him as well as the Huguenots. He marched towards Paris, prepared to punish the citizens for their desertion of him. Fear prevailed in the city when this huge army appeared

before the walls, which the inhabitants were not strong enough to protect, for they had not received from the Prince of Parma the help which had been promised them. The clergy did all they could to rouse the religious zeal of the people against their king, and succeeded in inspiring one of their own body with the belief that it would be a pious action to rid France of him. A young priest, named Jacques Clément, believing that he was doing a service to God and religion, made his way into the presence of the king, and gave him a wound of which he died some hours afterwards.

Assassina-
tion of
Henry III.,
1589.

Henry of Navarre was now, by succession, the lawful King of France; but he was a Huguenot, and as such could not be acknowledged by the League. Even the Catholic followers of the late king were indignant at the thought of a Huguenot coming to the throne of France, and declared they would rather join the League than that such a thing should happen. Thus, in the midst of strife and opposition, began the reign of Henri Quatre—of him who was afterwards one of the most loved kings of France, styled by his subjects, “the Great.” It was now that he showed his real greatness and strength of character. After the murder of Henry III., the friends of Navarre, fearing that the Catholics in the camp outside the walls of Paris would unite with the citizens to crush the Huguenots, urged him to retire. But Henry felt that to do so was to give up his claims to the throne, and he refused. His ideal was not the triumph of Protestantism, but the establishment of peace in France, the union under one crown of the parties into which the unhappy country was split up. That crown was his by right, by the will of God, and he intended to assert his claim to

Opposition
to Navarre.

it with his life, if need should be. When the council of the late king decided that he was the lawful heir to the throne, but that no Protestant could be allowed to rule as King of France, he replied that, on **Concessions to the council.** the question of religion, he was ready to be "further instructed," and promised that the Huguenots should have liberty of worship only in those towns in which it had been permitted by the last edict of Henry III. He seemed to think that while, as a prince, he was free to hold whatever form of religious belief he chose, as a king his most sacred duty was to secure the peace and welfare of his subjects.

Most of the royalist Catholics now agreed to acknowledge him as Henry IV. of France, and supported him in the war that followed with the League.

War with the League. This was no mere struggle between two parties, but a war in which all Europe was interested. On the one side were the extreme Catholics, supported by Philip of Spain, who saw his way to making France merely a part of his Spanish kingdom; on the other, almost all the rest of Europe, the peace and safety of which would be endangered if the dominion of Spain were to extend over France. Elizabeth of England, alarmed at the prospect of Spain being separated from her kingdom only by the narrow Channel, eagerly sent troops and money to Henry IV., while the party of the League were of course assisted by Philip.

Henry thought it wiser at first to withdraw his army from Paris, and contented himself with driving the Leaguers out of Maine and Anjou, and seizing the towns on the Loire. The Duke of Mayenne, who had been appointed Lieutenant-general of France, marched against him with a superior force, and a great pitched **Battle of Ivry, 1590.** battle took place on the plains of Ivry, not

far from the town of Dreux, which Henry had besieged. This battle was the greatest triumph which Henry had ever won, and it was gained through his own courage and resolution. The army of Mayenne, with the Spanish and the Flemish troops which Philip had sent, was much stronger than that of the king, which was slowly giving way before it. Foot by foot the king's white banner was seen to move backwards, and the whole army seemed ready to flee, when the king himself turned upon them with flashing eyes, and bade them, if they dared not stand and fight, at least turn and see him die. Then striking spurs into his horse, he rushed upon the enemy, and the white plumes on his helmet were seen waving amid the thickest of their ranks. This action aroused all the chivalry of his mounted followers,—

“ And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre.”

And so the field was won for France and lost for Spain. Henry had made himself dear to his army before by his courage, his amiable temper, and his tact; but now he was looked up to and revered as a hero, and his deeds were celebrated in song. He now led his army towards Paris, and in about a month had seized the towns in its neighbourhood by which the city was supplied, and was encamped outside its walls. Within, there were some who would willingly have made peace with him; but the mass of the people, stirred up by the priests, were fiercely opposed to him, and declared that he was coming to bathe his arms in blood to the elbows in vengeance for the massacre of 1572. Rather than open their gates to a Huguenot king they would die of starvation. For

Henry
marches
against
Paris.

a while it seemed as if they would be reduced to this, so scarce did provisions become in the city. The Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, earned the gratitude of the people by first selling his plate to buy provisions for them, and afterwards teaching them how to make food from oats, like the Scots. He had great caldrons set up before his house for making oatmeal porridge, and thus helped to increase the favour in which the King of Spain was at this time held by the Parisians.

**Parma in
France.**

This favour was strengthened when, a few months after the beginning of the siege, the celebrated Prince of Parma arrived in France with his splendid army.

During the six years that had passed since the murder of the Prince of Orange, Parma had been almost constantly engaged in the Netherlands; but though he had accomplished many brilliant feats, he had not succeeded in reducing the United Provinces to obedience to Spain. This year of 1590 he had intended making an attack on Holland and Zealand, and he was not well pleased when Philip's orders obliged him to leave the Netherlands for France.

Henry quitted his position before Paris, and gave

His tactics.

Parma a chance of battle in open field, which the prince was too experienced a general to accept. Instead, he tired out by his manœuvres the army of his enemy, without ever coming to a decisive fight, till at length Henry was forced to give in to the entreaties of many of the nobles who had joined him, to be permitted to return to their homes. Thus, in spite of his brilliant victory at Ivry, Henry seemed no nearer success than he had been before it. So much were the party of the League still opposed to him, that they would rather have seen France under the dominion of

Spain than have acknowledged him as king, and they were actually negotiating with Philip about giving the throne of France to his daughter Isabella.

But two years later, Henry's most formidable enemy, the Prince of Parma, died at Arras, just when he was mustering his army for a campaign which was expected to decide the fate of France. Parma was a very brave man, and a most able general, and to the last he laboured for the cause to which he had devoted himself. But it was a mistaken cause—it was the cause of tyranny and bigotry; while the object for which Henry struggled was a noble one—the union and freedom of France, and the peace and welfare of the people. And in the end he triumphed, but not until he had renounced the Protestant faith. For long it had been quite plain that the great mass of the French people would never accept the Protestant religion, or acknowledge a Protestant king; for long Henry's great minister, Sully, had been urging him to enter the Roman Catholic Church, as the only means of securing the peace and union of France. Now the peace and union of France were Henry's ideal. He was *not* a great apostle or reformer, but he *was* a great king; he recognized the right of the people to hold their own views on religious questions, while he believed that he himself, as king, was bound to consider the welfare of the nation before everything else. He held that the *man* must be subordinate to the *king*. No doubt, too, he considered that, if he were once king of France, he would be able to do much more for the protection of the Huguenots than he could hope to do as long as he was only the head of a party. In 1593, he was solemnly received into the Catholic Church.

Death of
Parma,
1592.

Henry's
change of
religion,
1593.

Not very long afterwards, he entered Paris without opposition; and gradually, one after the other, the nobles who had fought against him either voluntarily acknowledged him as king, or were conquered by him in battle and forced to submit to his authority. Even the Duke of Mayenne did homage to him in 1596, and was afterwards a faithful subject. An unimportant war was carried on with Spain for some years, but was brought to an end in 1598 by the Peace of Vervins. This year, 1598, was a most important one in the history of Europe and of Protestantism. It was in this year that Henry IV.

Submission of the nobles. summoned the heads of the Huguenot party to meet him at Nantes. He there passed the celebrated Edict of Nantes, which put an end for the time to the religious struggle in France by granting toleration to the Huguenots. It was in this year that a rebellion broke out in Ireland, under the Earl of Tyrone, which was supported by troops sent by Philip of Spain, who, though now nearing his end, had

Edict of Nantes, 1598. not yet given up his schemes against England. **Death of Philip of Spain.** It was in this year that Philip died, after a reign of more than forty years, during which he had the glory of holding all Europe in terror of his power and his bigotry. Even before his death, Spain had ceased to be the vast power she had been; her long wars had exhausted her wealth, and she had been shaken by three great blows—the loss of the United Provinces, the defeat of the Armada, and the elevation of Henry IV. to the throne of France.

While Spain was thus slowly sinking, France was steadily rising under the wise and careful government of her great king and his able minister, Sully. The latter, by his skilful management, succeeded in putting

in order the money affairs of the country, which, at Henry's accession, had been burdened with debt; while the king strove to put down the tyranny of the great nobles, who, during the wars, had acted like independent princes, to assert the authority of parliament and the crown, to encourage manufactures and commerce, and to improve agriculture. There is a saying of his, long remembered by the people of France, that he "wished every peasant could have a fowl in his pot on Sundays."

The govern-
ment of
Henry IV.

While he was restoring peace and order in France, the sixteenth century had ended; and so had the reign of the last of the monarchs whose schemes and struggles had made history during the latter half of the century. Only five years after Philip of Spain, in 1603, died his great opponent, Elizabeth of England, worn out with long years of mental toil and anxiety, and heart-broken by the treachery and execution of her favourite, the Earl of Essex. She had done her work, and her time had come.

Death of
Elizabeth,
1603.

Henry, though it seemed that he had still much to do, lived only some seven years longer. In 1610, just when he was about to enter on a great war with Austria, he was stabbed to death in his carriage by a fanatic Catholic, named Ravaillac. But he had carried out his ideal: he had united France under one crown, saved her freedom against the schemes of Spain, restored peace and order within her borders, and protected the Protestants. Though he had many faults, Henry IV. had shown that he knew well the true meaning and sanctity of *kingship*.

Death of
Henry IV.,
1610.

CHAPTER IV.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS—THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

ABOUT this time—in the beginning of the seventeenth century—the people of the northern peninsula of Europe began to take an important part in European history. It will be remembered how, several centuries earlier—from the eighth to the eleventh century—they had made themselves felt all over Europe

by their bold roving expeditions, their attacks on the coasts of the different countries, and their conquests in many places, particularly in France and England. But during the last five or six centuries, their wars and battles had been chiefly among themselves, and do not belong to European history; indeed, an outsider finds it impossible to take much interest in the disputes and struggles of the Olafs, and Sigurds, and Sverkers, who successively wore the crowns of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. In

1397, these crowns were united by the Union of Calmar, by which the celebrated Margaret, daughter of Valdemar, King of Denmark, became queen of the three kingdoms. This union, however, did not bring peace. Sweden, which had been conquered by Margaret, did not cease to struggle for her independence, as Scotland had struggled with England, until, at the end of a hundred and twenty-six

Early his-
tory of
Scandinavia.

Union of
Calmar,
1397.

years, she succeeded in regaining it, through the heroism of Gustavus Vasa, the grandfather of the "torch-bearer" who here takes his place in our series.

The story of Gustavus Vasa is as interesting as any in history. Imprisoned in Denmark for taking part in a rising of the Swedes against their Danish oppressors, he managed to make his escape, and for a while wandered about the country disguised as a peasant, till he succeeded in getting on board a vessel, which bore him to his native land. Arrived in Sweden, he found himself an outlaw, to whom no one dared give food or shelter, and he was forced to skulk about from place to place in disguise. For some time he worked as a miner in the copper mines of the district known as Dalecarlia, and it was to the miners of this district that he first revealed himself.

Gustavus
Vasa.

On a Sunday, when the bells were ringing, he addressed the people who were flocking to church, told them who he was, reminded them of what he and they had suffered from the tyranny of Denmark, and of what they had yet to fear, and urged them to rouse themselves to try to recover their freedom. The men flew to arms, and under the leadership of Gustavus succeeded in driving the Danish governor out of the district. They were now joined by many other patriotic Swedes, and Gustavus led them on to one victory after another, until, in 1523, he had restored the freedom of Sweden, and was crowned king by the unanimous consent of the people. His after life showed that they had not been mistaken in their choice of a sovereign; he did more for the welfare and civilization of his country than any previous king had done. It was in his reign and through his action that the Lutheran religion became

Heads a
revolt.

Is crowned
king, 1523.

the established faith of Sweden. He encouraged learning and commerce, improved the army and navy, and built many fine buildings. He died in 1560, the year in which the Reformation was established in Scotland. His son Erik, who was very inferior to his father, was one of the many suitors for the hand of Queen Elizabeth of England, and afterwards for that of Mary of Scotland; but he married in the end a fruit-seller named Catherine, who exercised great influence over him. In consequence of many follies and crimes which he had committed, this king was deposed by his subjects, and was succeeded in turn by his two brothers, John and Charles. The latter was the father of Gustavus Adolphus, the greatest king that ever sat on the Swedish throne.

**His death,
1560.**

Erik XIV.

When his father died in 1611, Gustavus was but seventeen years of age, having been born in 1594, the year in which Henry of Navarre entered Paris as the acknowledged king of France. A law existed in Sweden which forbade any king to rule under the age of twenty-four; but Gustavus Adolphus had already shown so much wisdom and talent, that, in spite of his youth, he was crowned King of Sweden. His position was by no means an easy one. His claim to the throne was disputed by his cousin Sigismund, King of Poland, who had for a while been King of Sweden, but had afterwards been deposed; and besides this, Sweden was engaged in a war with Denmark, and was overrun by Danes, into whose hands many of the strongholds of the country had fallen. Gustavus had to begin his reign by carrying on this war, in which he won many victories, and gained much useful experience. In 1613, however, it was brought to

**Gustavus
Adolphus
becomes
king, 1611.**

**The war
with
Denmark.**

an end by a treaty between the two kings, the terms of which were not altogether favourable to Sweden, though she kept her freedom. This treaty was partly negotiated by James VI. of Scotland, who, in 1603, had succeeded Elizabeth on the throne of England, in right of his mother, Mary Stuart. Having married the Princess Anne of Denmark, he had naturally an interest in the affairs of that country.

As soon as the war with Denmark was concluded, Gustavus turned his attention to the affairs of his own country. He took measures to encourage its commerce and agriculture, and showed the judgment and knowledge of character which, young though he was, he already possessed, by the appointments he made to the various offices of state. Oxenstiern in particular, who was appointed chancellor, afterwards proved the wisdom of the young king's choice.

The affairs
of Sweden.

When these affairs were settled, Gustavus was drawn into a war with Russia, which he carried on so successfully that, when it was ended by a treaty in 1617, he had made himself master of the Baltic Sea, and was able to boast that the Russians could not launch a single boat upon it without the permission of Sweden. In the war with Poland that followed not long afterwards, he showed no less skill as a general, and gained some brilliant victories, which drew upon him the attention of the other powers of Europe. At that time a terrible war, in which all Europe was interested, had been going on for some years in Germany ; and the powers on one side, as they watched the triumphant career of the young King of Sweden, believed that he would make a useful champion of their cause. They therefore eagerly helped to arrange a

War with
Poland.

truce between Poland and Sweden, which was concluded in 1629.

Gustavus was now at liberty to take part, if he chose, in the great Thirty Years' War. After serious consideration, he resolved to do so. In order to understand what were his motives for this decision, we must here consider the *causes* of the war, as well as the character and position of Gustavus himself. It will be re-

The Thirty
Years' War.

membered that, more than half a century before this time, the Protestant princes in Germany had become so powerful that they were able, in 1555, to force the emperor, Charles V., to consent to a treaty, known as the Peace of Augsburg. Since that time, however, Protestantism had been gradually losing ground in Germany, while the Catholic party had been growing steadily stronger year by year, chiefly, perhaps, in consequence of the exertions of a new order of priests, known as the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, which had been founded by a Spaniard of noble family, named Ignatius Loyola, but partly too on account of the division of the Protestants into two parties—Lutherans and Calvinists—who were almost as much opposed to each other as to the Catholics. As the Catholics grew stronger, it was found that the Treaty of Augsburg could not protect the rights and liberties of the Protestants, for it contained certain clauses which the Catholics were able to make use of for their own advantage. Another cause which threatened the peace and safety of the Protestants was the ambition of the House of Austria, who were all Catholics. It was from this house that Charles V. had sprung, and on his death the empire of Germany had passed to his brother Ferdinand, in whose family it still remained. Now the position of emperor of Germany was very different from

that of king of France, or Spain, or England. It was very little more than an empty honour, and brought with it no real power over the princes of Germany, each of whom was absolute ruler in his own dominions. But as Protestantism became weaker and Catholicism stronger, the ambitious princes of the Austrian family fancied that by crushing the Protestants they could make the head of their house the supreme ruler of Germany. It was these two causes—the increased strength of the Catholic party in Germany, and the ambition of the ruling family of Austria—that led to the most terrible war by which Europe was ever laid waste.

As early as 1608, the Protestants, both Lutheran and Calvinist, feeling their liberty endangered, formed themselves into what was known as the Protestant Union; and not long afterwards the Catholics united in the Catholic League. For a while it seemed as if the war must break out at once; and it was now that Henry IV. of France, having set his own kingdom in order, was preparing an army to help to humble the pride of Austria, when, as we have seen, his life was cut short by the assassin Ravallac. But it was not till some eight years later that the war began, which was to last for thirty long years.

The emperor, contrary to the wish of the people of Bohemia, who were mostly Protestants, had appointed as their king his cousin, Ferdinand of Styria, who was a zealous Catholic. Reluctantly forced to accept as their king a man whom they would never of their own accord have chosen, the people of Bohemia were ready to break out into rebellion on the slightest provocation. By the time he had been king a year, Ferdinand had given so much provocation

The Protestant Union
and the Catholic League.

The war in Bohemia,
1618.

to his Protestant subjects by his persecutions, that, in 1618, they rose up in arms against him, and drove the Jesuits out of the country. The Protestant princes of the Union did not at once come to their assistance; but the Duke of Savoy sent them a small army of two thousand men, under Count Ernest of Mansfeld. Though this army won some small victories, it was almost as great an evil for the Bohemians as for the enemy; for as the general had no means of paying his men, he was forced to let them support themselves by plundering and pillaging the very people whom they had come to help. All through this terrible war, the greatest sufferings of the people of Germany were perhaps caused less by the enemy than by the greed and vices of the lawless mercenary troops which had come to fight in their cause.

The year after the outbreak of the Bohemian war, in 1619—just a hundred years since Charles of Spain, Francis I. of France, and Henry VIII. of England had been competitors for the title of emperor—that title

Ferdinand becomes emperor, 1619. once more became vacant, and was bestowed upon Ferdinand of Bohemia. About the same time, the people of Bohemia offered their crown

to Frederick, the Elector Palatine, part of whose dominions bordered on their country. This young prince was

The Elector Palatine. married to Elizabeth, the daughter of James I. of England and granddaughter of Mary

Stuart, and from her our present royal family is descended. James, who had before tried to patch up a peace between the Bohemians and their king, Ferdinand, now did all he could to prevent his son-in-law from accepting the crown offered him. During his reign, James was frequently engaged in trying to make peace between two countries or parties. We have

already seen how he negotiated between Denmark and Sweden ; and, in 1609, he helped to arrange the terms of a truce between Spain and the United Provinces, which put an end to the war that had been going on since the death of the Prince of Orange, under the leadership of his son, Prince Maurice of Nassau, who was one of the ablest generals of his time. The character of James is one of the strangest in history. Possessed of sound judgment and of considerable intellect, he was at times apt to think his cleverness greater than it was, and was firmly convinced that he could put everybody and everything right, if people would only listen to him. At the same time, he was weak, cowardly, and domineering, and filled with faith in the divine right of kings to do whatever they liked. Above all, he loved his own way, and he loved peace ; and he frequently offended his parliament by acting without consulting them, and by forming alliances with Catholic Spain, which he believed to be strong, rather than by taking part with the Protestant powers of Europe, which he considered weak. Had he been a stronger man, he might have made himself the champion of the Protestant cause in Germany ; as it was, he contented himself first by negotiating, and afterwards by sending insufficient help.

Meantime James's son-in-law, disregarding his advice, had accepted the crown of Bohemia, and was crowned at Prague, in November 1619. A few days later, the forces of the emperor, under the celebrated general Tilly, marched against him and defeated him completely at the battle of the White Hill, outside the walls of Prague. Frederick fled for his life, and Bohemia was forced to submit to the emperor. Frederick was now driven, not only out of Bohemia, but also out

Frederick,
King of
Bohemia,
1619.

Battle of the
White Hill,
1619.



of his own dominions, the Palatinate, which was invaded by the troops of the emperor, and in 1623 was taken from him and given to Maximilian of Bavaria.

The following year (1624), James of England, who, though unwilling to support his son-in-law's claims to the throne of Bohemia, could not stand by and see him stripped of his own dominions, made some attempts to help to recover the Palatinate. He had applied for assistance, in the first place, to Spain, with which country he was negotiating a marriage between his son Charles, afterwards Charles I., and a Spanish princess. Spain, however, either could

Action of
James I.

not or would not help. James next tried to secure the help of France; but France, troubled at this time by disturbances among the Huguenots, would do but little, so James had recourse to the kingdoms of the north. In 1624, ambassadors arrived from England at the court of Gustavus Adolphus and at that of Christian IV. of Denmark, to press these kings to take part in the great war going on in Germany. Gustavus, who understood well the importance of the war and the strength of Austria, demanded, as the condition of his taking the field in support of the Protestants in Germany, terms which James felt he could not meet. He resolved, therefore, to come to an agreement with Christian, whose terms were more moderate. Before this agreement was concluded, however, James died early in 1625, and was succeeded by his unfortunate son, Charles I. A few months later, Christian IV., Christian IV. takes the field. who had concluded with Charles the agreement begun with his father, took the field with an army composed of Scots and English, Danes and Germans. He was now the recognized leader of the Protestant party, and on this account the war for the next few years has been called the Danish war.

Though he was in many ways an able man, it soon became evident that Christian was not the equal of the two great generals opposed to him—Tilly and Wallenstein. Tilly was not a native of the Tilly. country in which he was now fighting. He was born in the Spanish Netherlands, and had served under all the greatest Spanish generals of his time—under the terrible Alva, under Don John of Austria, and under the Prince of Parma—in whose wars he had gained experience, which helped to raise him to the high position he afterwards held as a commander. Wallenstein,

whose renown as a general became much greater than that of Tilly, was by birth a Bohemian, belonging to a noble but poor family. He himself, however, gradually became very wealthy, partly through a rich marriage, and partly by other means; and when the war broke out in Bohemia, he was able to buy several estates at a very low price. Thus he was soon the largest landholder in the country, and the Emperor Ferdinand, for whom he had fought in Hungary and elsewhere, bestowed on him the title of Prince of Friedland. When Christian of Denmark came to the support of the German Protestants, Ferdinand felt that the army under Tilly was not strong enough to oppose alone the forces of the enemy; but he had not the means to raise another. Wallenstein now offered to raise an army at his own cost, which was to be supported, not by actual pillage, like the army of Count Mansfeld, but by contributions which he intended to demand from the authorities of the towns or districts in which he happened to be quartered.

The offer was accepted; and in the autumn of 1625, Wallenstein led his newly-raised army to Magdeburg, where they lived in a style of magnificence on the money forced from the unfortunate inhabitants of the district. The next spring, he completely defeated Mansfeld at the bridge of Dessau, on the Elbe; and a few months later, Tilly won an important victory over Christian IV. at Lutter. About the same time, Mansfeld, whom Wallenstein had followed into Hungary, was seized with illness, and died, bidding his followers with his last breath "be united," and "hold out like men."

Wallenstein now carried everything before him. Town after town submitted to him; only the town of

Stralsund succeeded in holding out against him. Not content with crushing the independence of the German Protestant princes, he had resolved to gain the command of the Baltic for his master, the emperor. To further this object, Ferdinand had bestowed upon him the duchy of Mecklenburg, on the shores of the Baltic, which he had no right to give, and had also appointed him admiral of the Baltic, with power to raise a fleet. Wallenstein now made himself master of all the German towns on the Baltic, except Stralsund. This town was assisted by the Danes and Swedes, and by a small Scottish force under Alexander Leslie, who afterwards distinguished himself in his own country; and so well did the garrison defend it that the great imperialist general was forced to retire, though he had boasted that he would take the place "even if it were fastened by chains to heaven."

Victories of
Wallenstein.

Stralsund
holds out.

But one small success such as this could not save the Protestant cause. In 1629, Christian IV. thought it wiser to make peace with the emperor, and retire to his own kingdom. Deserted by Christian, and unable to get assistance from Charles of England, who, always in difficulties with his parliaments, had found it impossible to fulfil the promises he had made, the Protestants of Germany had nowhere to look to for help but to Sweden. In their despair, they turned to Gustavus Adolphus, who was just then concluding his victorious war with Poland. Not only the Protestants, but France also, though a Roman Catholic country, was eager that Gustavus should take part in the war against the emperor; for the King of France, and his great minister Richelieu, feared that the House of Austria was becoming too powerful for the safety of France.

End of
"Danish"
war, 1629.

Gustavus reflected deeply before deciding to undertake the great work offered to him, so full was it of terrible dangers and difficulties. But he was an earnest Protestant, and the sufferings of the Protestants in Germany, so cruelly oppressed by the victorious Catholics, moved him; he was a wise, far-seeing ruler, and he foresaw that Wallenstein's victories on the shores of the Baltic threatened not only the commerce of Sweden, but also her freedom; he was an ambitious general, a daring soldier, with all the love of adventure of his Norse ancestors in his veins; and he perceived in the command offered him a means of raising his country to a high place among the powers of Europe. For some such reasons as these, he resolved to risk the peace and safety of his country, as well as his own life. "For me," he exclaimed, when he had taken his resolution, "there remains henceforth no more peace but the eternal!"

Even before setting out, he seemed to have some presentiment that he should never return to his native land. He set all the affairs of his kingdom in order; and at the Diet of Stockholm, in May 1630, he took a solemn leave of the Estates of Sweden, holding in his arms his four-year-old daughter, Christina, the heir to the Swedish throne. As in an unsteady voice he made his parting speech, there was scarcely a dry eye in the assembly.

In June 1630—just a hundred years after the Protestants of Germany had defended their faith at the Diet of Augsburg—the new champion of Protestantism landed on the island of Usedom, off the coast of Pomerania, with an army of

some fifteen thousand men. This army was composed largely of Scottish and English troops, and a large number of the officers also were British. During the reign of James there had been no war in the island, and adventurous younger sons of good families eagerly set out to seek their fortunes in the great struggle going on on the Continent. Gustavus himself was the first to set foot on German soil; and kneeling down, he prayed to God to grant him help in the work he had begun. Then rising, he seized a spade, and was the first to begin the intrenchments of his camp. King and general though he was, he did not refuse to take his share of the toils and hardships and dangers to which the common soldiers were exposed.

The news of the landing of the Swedish king in Germany at first caused but slight alarm among the party of the emperor, whose forces were very much larger than those of Gustavus. The older powers of Europe held in contempt the new, untried kingdom of the north; and the people of Vienna called Gustavus in mockery the "Snow King," meaning that he and his army would soon melt as they advanced southwards. So little fear of danger had the Imperialists from the Swedish army, that, just about the time when Gustavus was landing in Pomerania, the great Wallenstein dismissed. Wallenstein was dismissed from command.

The reason alleged for this act was the cruelty and violence of Wallenstein's army, and the want and starvation which the need of supporting it had brought upon the people; but perhaps the jealousy and suspicion of some of the Catholic nobles and clergy towards the great general had done something to bring about his dismissal.

Meantime Gustavus had made himself master of

Pomerania, and soon was able to restore Mecklenburg, which the emperor had bestowed on Wallenstein, to its former dukes. But for long he was hampered in his movements by the two most powerful Protestant princes—his brother-in-law, the Elector of Brandenburg, and the Elector of Saxony—who refused to join him, or to help him in any way. Bitter was the indignation of the heroic king, who had left his own kingdom and was risking his own life in the cause of these unworthy Protestants. “You Protestants,” he exclaimed, “will have to answer at the day of judgment that you would do nothing for the cause of God!” It was owing to the position which these two electors took up that Gustavus was unable to relieve the town of Magdeburg, when it was besieged by Tilly; and the sack of Magdeburg is one of the most horrible in history.

It was not till more than a year after the landing of the Swedes in Germany that they were at length joined by the forces of the Elector of Saxony. The Saxons were splendid with new uniforms, and glittering with new arms; and they laughed when they met the war-worn ranks of the Swedes, with their ragged and mud-stained uniforms. But it was the Swedes who had reason to laugh when, not long afterwards, the army of Gustavus was drawn up opposite that of Tilly near the **Battle of Breitenfeld,** village of Breitenfeld, some five miles from **1631.** Leipzig. Scarcely had the brand-new troops of Saxony come in sight of the enemy, when the greater number of them were flying headlong. But Gustavus showed that he knew how to do without them. He had introduced a new arrangement of the ranks of an army, much better fitted to the use of modern weapons than the old disposition in heavy masses, which had

been in use since before the invention of fire-arms. Though much superior in numbers, Tilly's unwieldy squares were at a disadvantage with the light, nimble forces of the enemy, and soon gave way before the fiery onset of the Swedes and the unerring fire of the Scottish musketry. It was a brilliant victory for Gustavus, who throughout the whole fight had shown the greatest skill and daring. Ever in the thick of the battle, he had spared himself no more than if he had been the meanest soldier in his own army.

The news of this great victory was everywhere received by the Protestants with the wildest joy. Gustavus now marched westwards towards the Rhine, overcoming all opposition, and everywhere restoring the Protestants to those rights that had been taken from them by the emperor. In the Protestant towns, the people hailed him as their deliverer; and when he made his entry, tears were seen to stream down the cheeks even of bearded men. "They make a god of me," he remarked once to his chaplain; "God will punish me for this." And, indeed, contrasted with their own weak or sluggish princes, he must have seemed god-like to the Protestants of Germany—this northern king, with his tall, manly form, his golden hair, his noble features and eloquent speech, who had left his own kingdom and risked his life to maintain their rights. Then he was wholly unlike the generals of his time in this, that he sternly forbade his soldiers to plunder, and terrible was his anger when he found at any time that his commands on this point had been disobeyed.

Gustavus
marches to
the Rhine.

As he still advanced westwards, and town after town opened its gates to him, even the French, who were his allies, became alarmed at his power, and the King of

France is said to have exclaimed, "This Goth must be stopped." But he was not to be stopped just yet. He spent Christmas of 1631 at Mainz, on the Rhine, and Easter of 1632 at Donauwörth, on the Danube, which he had taken from the enemy after a sharp struggle.

On the banks of the river Lech he found Tilly awaiting him; but planting his guns so as to sweep the enemy, he passed over his troops in safety, and drove the forces of Tilly before him. The old general himself was carried from the field mortally wounded.

**The passage
of the Lech,
1632.
Death of
Tilly.**

It now seemed that there was no longer any one to oppose the victorious Swedish king; but the struggle was not yet over. The emperor, in alarm at the victories of Gustavus, had restored Wallenstein to power, and that great general had once more gathered a large army. With his usual cautious policy, he refused to accept the offer of battle which Gustavus gave him, and intrenched himself strongly at Fürth, near the town of Nuremberg, where the Swedish king had his quarters. In this town, owing to the presence of the Swedish army, and of numbers of country people, who had flocked in for protection, there became a great scarcity of provisions, and reports of acts of plunder by some of the German troops in his service reached the king. He sent for the German officers, and rebuked them severely for robbing their own "brothers in the faith."

After a vain attempt to force Wallenstein's intrenchments, Gustavus was obliged to leave Nuremberg for want of supplies. Wallenstein, too, broke up his camp, and moved northwards. In November 1632, the two armies faced each other on the plain of Lützen, in Saxony, only a few miles from

**Battle of
Lützen, 1632.**

Leipzig. When, on the morning of the great battle, his armour was brought to Gustavus, he put it aside, because it chafed some half-healed wound, saying, as he did so, "God is my armour." And with no armour but his faith in God and the cause for which he fought, he led forward his cavalry against the greatest general of the time. Everywhere Wallenstein's lines were giving way; but that general brought up his reserves, and the infantry in the centre of the Swedish army began to fall back before them. Hearing this, Gustavus, with only a few attendants, rapidly galloped across the field to check the retreat. A mist had fallen on the scene, and short-sighted as he was, the king dashed into the midst of a company of the enemy. His horse was shot under him, and another bullet shattered his left arm. Sick and faint, he turned to a German officer near him, saying, "Cousin, lead me out of the tumult, for I am hurt." But as he spoke a bullet passed through his back, and he sank to the ground. Some horsemen now came up and demanded his name of the young German aide-de-camp, who was left alone supporting the king. The youth refused to answer; but Gustavus himself feebly replied, "I was the King of Sweden." They shot him through the head. And when the battle was over, the hero, who had delivered the Protestants from oppression, was found lying face downwards in the dust.

**Death of
Gustavus.**

As he himself had said, when rebuked for exposing too rashly his precious life, "God is immortal." The death of the leader they loved roused all the fire of the Swedish army, and after a terrible fight of many hours, the great Wallenstein, for the first time in his career, retreated in defeat.

CHAPTER V.

CARDINAL RICHELIEU—FOUNDATION OF SUPREMACY OF FRANCE.

THE battle of Lützen did not put an end to the terrible war. For sixteen bitter years it was still to drag on, though the heroic king, who had seemed the only man fit to lead the Protestants, had ceased to be. While his little daughter, Christina, became Queen of Sweden, his chancellor, Oxenstiern, took the management of the kingdom and of the Swedish army; and there were many brave generals who had learned the art of war in his battles, and were able to follow in his footsteps, though not to fill his place.

Less than two years after the battle of Lützen, the great general who had opposed the Swedish army on that fatal field died a miserable death. Wallenstein was not, like the emperor, a bigoted Catholic. Wallenstein's policy. His great aim was not to crush Protestantism, but to bring all the independent states of Germany under the power of the emperor, and thus to make a united German nation. His experience had taught him that this end was not to be accomplished by war—that some concessions must be made to the Protestants. Shortly after the battle of Lützen, he had on his own authority made a peace with the Elector of Saxony on terms favourable to the Protestants. But

the emperor, urged by the government of Spain and the Jesuits not to make peace with heretics, refused to give his consent to the terms proposed. Doubts had begun to assail him of the fidelity of his great general, whom few loved and all feared; dark hints were whispered in his ears by the enemies of Wallenstein. Perhaps it is scarcely to be wondered at that men should have suspected the general who, during the period when the command had been taken from him, was known to have offered to unite with Gustavus Adolphus against the emperor for whom he had before fought. Even now he was carrying on negotiations with Oxenstiern and with Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, who since the death of Gustavus had held the chief command in the Swedish army. If it can be said in Wallenstein's behalf that the object of his intrigues and negotiations was only to bring about a peace, which he believed to be for the good of the emperor and of Germany, at least it cannot be denied that he thought himself strong enough, with his army at his back, to act independently of his sovereign. When a subject takes up an independent position, he lays himself open to be regarded as a traitor, whatever his motives may be. By many it was believed that Wallenstein intended to make himself King of Bohemia.

In January 1634, the emperor resolved to deprive him of the command of the army. But this resolution was kept secret for a few days, while some of the generals who had served under Wallenstein were won over to the emperor, and charged to get possession of their former leader. Rumours of what had taken place reached Wallenstein. He assembled the colonels of his army at Pilsen in Bavaria, told them that false accusations had been made against him by his enemies, and induced them to promise that

The end of
Wallenstein.

they would support him. He now took up his quarters at Eger, where he expected to be joined by Bernard of Saxe-Weimar with an army. What his plans were can only be guessed, for he was not allowed to carry them out. In his army was a certain Colonel Butler, an Irish Catholic, who had received orders from Piccolomini, one of the generals who had gone over to the emperor, to bring Wallenstein to him, dead or alive. The fortress of Eger, too, was held for the emperor by two Scottish officers, Gordon and Leslie, who had refused to take orders from Wallenstein, saying that they had sworn to obey only the emperor. These three—Butler, Gordon, and Leslie—held a consultation, and resolved to “kill the traitors.” The chief supporters of Wallenstein were slain while at table; and then an Irish captain named Devereux undertook the assassination of the great general himself. Accompanied by a few soldiers, he burst into Wallenstein’s room, when he had retired for the night. Seeing him enter with armed men, Wallenstein sprang up, and exclaiming, “Scoundrel and traitor,” flung out his arms, and received his death-blow on his breast, as became a brave man.

Thus miserably perished the greatest general of his time. The great German poet Schiller has taken his strange career as the subject of three well-known dramas.

The army of Wallenstein was now put under the command of the King of Hungary, the son of the emperor. Supported by a large Spanish force under the cardinal-infant, a prince of the royal House of Spain, it met the Protestant army at Nördlingen, in September 1634. The Protestant leaders, Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, and the Swedish general Horn, were not at one with each other; and partly on this account, the

battle ended in a terrible defeat for the Protestants, and soon the whole of South Germany was in the hands of the Imperialists. In 1635, the emperor and the Elector of Saxony signed the Peace of Prague, which was accepted by some of the Protestant princes and cities, though not by all.

**The Peace
of Prague,
1635.**

Once more, as in the days before the Swedish monarch took the field, the House of Austria was triumphant, and the Protestants seemed utterly crushed. But such a state of affairs did not suit the views of the great French minister, Cardinal Richelieu, who now, along with the Swedes, took up a position of open hostility to the emperor.

Richelieu.

Born in 1585, this great statesman was at this time a man of about fifty years of age; and for eleven years he had held the office of chief minister to Louis XIII., in spite of many plots and intrigues to get him turned out. He belonged to a noble family of the province of Poitou, and had been at first intended for the army, but preferred to enter the church. He early became a bishop, and in 1614 he was present at an assembly of the States-General as a deputy from the clergy of Poitou.

At this time France was under the government of Mary of Medici, the widow of Henry of Navarre, who was twice married. His only son, Louis XIII., was a boy of some nine years old at the time when his father died, and his mother became regent during his minority. So far from carrying out the system of government by which her husband had secured the peace and welfare of France, she adopted a totally different policy. She showed herself intolerant to the Protestants, and eager to ally France with Spain. With this view, she betrothed her young son to a Spanish princess, Ann of Austria, and her daughter to a

**Mary of
Medici's
policy.**

Spanish prince. She contrived to give offence to Sully, the great minister of Henry IV., who retired from office; and she allowed herself to be entirely guided by an Italian named Concini and his wife, who had accompanied her from Italy at the time of her marriage with the king. By these means she offended the nobles, several of whom revolted against her.

Such was the state of France when, in 1614, Richelieu came under the notice of the regent at the assembly of the States-General. She gave him the post of almoner, and afterwards Concini made him minister of foreign affairs. But three years later, there took place what has been called the palace revolution. Louis XIII., who was as yet only sixteen years old, was persuaded by a favourite of his, named Luynes, to take the government into his own hands. Concini and his wife were put to death, and Mary of Medici was driven into exile. Richelieu accompanied her in her flight from Paris, and for the next two years occupied himself in writing theological works.

Meanwhile the young king, who was a bigoted Catholic, was soon engaged in a war with the Huguenots, in which the royal forces were commanded by the favourite Luynes, who showed himself quite unfit for the position. He died in 1621, and the following year the king made peace with the Huguenots. After the death of Luynes, the queen-mother once more returned to power, and through her means Richelieu became cardinal, and afterwards, in 1624, chief minister of the king—a position which he held till the end of his life.

At the time when he entered into office, the Thirty Years' War had been going on for some six years. At first it had not seemed greatly to concern France; but

when the Palatinate fell into the hands of the Imperialists, both Louis and his minister felt that it was dangerous to the freedom of France to have so near her borders the powerful House of Austria. **His policy and aims.** Throughout the course of his public life, it was the policy of Richelieu to oppose this house. His ideal, the object for which he laboured steadily during his whole career, was similar to that of Henry IV.—to make France a powerful monarchy. The king was to be made absolute ruler; the country was to be secured from rebellion and division within, and her borders were to be protected against attack from without. To carry out this object, three things in particular had to be done—first, the nobles, many of whom, since the death of Henry IV., had succeeded in making themselves almost independent of the crown, must be put down; secondly, the Huguenot towns must be stripped of the privileges they enjoyed, which gave them almost the position of a free state within the kingdom; and, thirdly, the House of Austria must be humbled.

With these views, his policy was very different from that of Mary of Medici. Instead of seeking an alliance with Spain, as she had done, his first action was to attempt to ally France with England. **The English marriage.** Louis had before this time married Ann of Austria; but Richelieu now arranged a marriage between the Princess Henrietta Maria and Charles of England. He agreed, at the same time, to take part in the great war by giving money to the Dutch to help them to carry on their war with Spain, and by sending an army against the Spaniards in North Italy. This **Anti-Spanish policy, 1624.** army succeeded in driving the Spaniards out of the Valteline, a valley on the borders of Switzerland and Italy, which was the only way

through which an army could well pass from the Austrian territory in Italy to the Austrian territory in Germany.

What further plans he had in view for humbling the House of Austria were for some time set aside by the outbreak of war with the Huguenots the following year, 1625. The terms of the peace which the king had made with them in 1622 had not been faithfully carried out, and in consequence of this, Rochelle, the chief Huguenot town, had taken up a position of open rebellion against him. Now Richelieu, though a cardinal of the Romish Church, was not an intolerant Catholic, and on future occasions he showed that he was not averse to granting to the Protestants liberty to worship in the way they chose; but he would not permit any portion of France to refuse obedience to the king. During the years when Christian of Denmark was suffering one defeat after another at the hands of Wallenstein and Tilly in Germany, Richelieu was engaged in a struggle with the Huguenots. He would at first willingly have arranged a peace with them, but the king and the Catholic people of France were in favour of war with the heretics; and later, when Charles of England sent troops to aid the Huguenots to resist their king, the chief minister showed himself no less eager than his monarch to crush the rebels.

In 1627, a large English fleet, with an army on board, under the command of Charles's favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, came to the assistance of Rochelle; but want of supplies from England forced them to retire before they could win the victory which, for a while, seemed almost within their grasp. The next year—the year in which Wallenstein besieged Stralsund—Richelieu surrounded Rochelle with an army, so that no help could

reach the unhappy town by land; and then he blocked the harbour by sinking vessels across its entrance and driving in great piles of wood, so that no ships from England could bring succour to the besieged. In a few months the town surrendered. It was now that Richelieu showed a wise tolerance. Though the walls of Rochelle were pulled down by order of the king, the people were told that they might continue to enjoy the right of worshipping in their own way. The great minister wished to make it plain that it was disobedience to the monarch, not religious liberty, that he meant to crush. Thus he brought the Huguenots into submission to the royal authority, without making them bitter enemies of the king; and he was able himself to lead armies into other lands without the fear that rebellion would break out at home as soon as his back was turned.

Siege of
Rochelle,
1628.

When affairs were thus settled in France, Richelieu once more turned his attention to his favourite scheme of humbling Austria. In 1629, he led an army into North Italy, where imperialist forces were besieging Mantua, the dukedom of which was claimed by a French noble, the Duke of Nevers. And here he showed that, priest though he was, he possessed considerable skill as a general. About the same time, he was carrying on negotiations with Gustavus Adolphus to induce him to take part in the war against the emperor; and two years later, when the Swedes had landed on the shores of Germany, he made a treaty with Gustavus, by which he promised to aid him with large sums of money. It may appear strange that a Catholic cardinal should, as it were, turn away from chastising the Protestants at home, to make a treaty with foreign Protestants against Catholics. But we

Treaty with
Gustavus,
1631.

must always remember that the main object of Richelieu was not to crush Protestantism, but to make France a powerful and united monarchy; and he was ready to side with any party that seemed likely to help him in carrying out this object.

This moderation and tolerance toward the Huguenots, which was perhaps the best feature of Richelieu's policy, was taken advantage of by his enemies to endeavour to deprive him of the favour of the king, who, as was said before, was a devoted Catholic. Mary of Medici, who had become the bitterest enemy of the man whom she herself had advanced to his high position, accused him to Louis of neglecting the interests of the Catholic religion. Jealous of the great influence which he had gained over the king, she used every means in her power to bring about the downfall of the great cardinal. Together with her younger son, the Duke of Orleans, and other discontented nobles, she entered into numerous schemes and plots for this purpose. In the year in which the treaty with Gustavus was signed, she and the Duke of Orleans fled from France to the Spanish Netherlands, where they formed an alliance with Spain, and at the same time endeavoured to raise a conspiracy at home by carrying on a secret correspondence with some of the

jealous and discontented nobles. In the following year, 1632, a rebellion broke out in the south of France, headed by the Duke of Montmorenci. The rebels, however, were easily defeated, and Richelieu showed himself pitiless and unsparing in punishing the leaders. The Duke of Montmorenci was executed; other nobles were imprisoned or banished. The king's brother alone, who had joined Montmorenci, was spared. Years after, when he was

dying, the cardinal was asked if he forgave his enemies. "I never had any enemies," he replied, "but those of France." If we regard this statement as true, it offers some excuse for his merciless severity to the French nobles who opposed him. If it were merely personal ambition which caused him to strike so heavily, that severity would be unpardonable. But there can be no doubt that it was for the welfare of France that the petty tyranny of the nobility, who oppressed the poorer people under them, should be put down. "I was severe to some that I might be good to all," he says of himself; and if this was indeed his motive, he deserves our forgiveness.

Richelieu's
severity
justifiable.

Whatever his motive, there can be no doubt that he devoted his thought and intellect to make France—what she became through him—the first power in Europe. Even if, as was wittily said, he strove to make Louis the first man in Europe, but the second in France, we can hardly blame him. Louis was weak, and quite unfit for the government of a great kingdom in unsettled times. Richelieu was strong, and gifted with as powerful an intellect as statesman ever possessed. Though he had not the moral grandeur of a Gustavus Adolphus, we cannot but admire the courage, the intellect, the restless, untiring activity with which he, a priest of feeble frame and delicate health, confronted alone and overcame so much powerful opposition, and carried out unswervingly the aim which he had set before himself.

His
character.

Though he had already taken some part in the Thirty Years' War, it was not till after the death of Wallenstein, and the signing of the Peace of Prague in 1635, that he openly came forward as the supporter of the Protestant party

He takes
part in the
war, 1635.

against the emperor. From that time onward, the war that raged in Germany was no longer a war of religion, but a struggle between France and the House of Austria. On the one side were Spain and Austria; on the other, France and the Swedes—the latter led by a succession of able generals, the captains of Gustavus. But the Swedish army was no longer what it had been in the time of that great monarch—a disciplined force kept from rapine and pillage by the strong hand of a powerful leader—it was merely, like the other armies in Germany, an irregular body of men supporting themselves by plunder. The unhappy country, overrun by thousands of armed foreigners, was gradually becoming almost a wilderness.

While Germany was thus being reduced to helplessness, France was daily growing stronger, thanks to the wise government of her great minister. Within her borders there were peace and prosperity. By his moderation, Richelieu had put an end to the Huguenot disturbances; by his strong measures, he had, for the time at least, crushed the rebellion of the nobles; and commerce and literature flourished through the encouragement which he had given to them. It is now

The Golden Age of France. that the Golden Age of French literature begins. As we have seen, there is a period in the history of almost every nation when she seems all at once to put forth her strength and genius—when her greatest deeds are done, and her greatest books are written. In Greece, this period was the fifty years that followed the Persian wars; in Rome, it was the time of Augustus, when the civil wars had been brought to an end. In Spain, her greatest novelist, Cervantes, and her greatest dramatist, Lope de Vega, both lived and wrote during the century that followed the conquest of the Moors and the discovery of America;

and it was after the defeat of the Spanish Armada that the English drama rose, and Shakespeare's immortal works were written. In France, the Golden Age began about the time we have now reached. It was then that the great dramatist Corneille wrote his drama on the story of the *Cid*, which was followed by many others; it was then that the philosopher Descartes startled the learned world by his writings. And these two were succeeded in the next reign by Molière, the Shakespeare of France, by Racine, by Pascal, and by many other famous men.

Richelieu himself had an ambition to be distinguished as an author, and wrote some dramas, which were not at all successful. Even great men have their weaknesses, and the chief weakness of the great French statesman seems to have been his literary ambition, which caused him to act in what appears a very contemptible way with regard to Corneille's *Cid*. At the very time when he was conducting the war with great prudence and skill, he was doing his utmost to put down this celebrated drama, from what motive it is impossible to say unless from jealousy of the popularity which it had gained.

From the time when he began to take part in the war, there were two objects on which he had particularly set his mind—the one was the possession of Alsace, the other was the defeat of the Spaniards at sea. Through Alsace, men and supplies passed from Spain to the Spanish Netherlands; and Richelieu saw what an advantage would be gained if he could interrupt the communication between these countries. In the year 1639, French garrisons took possession of the fortresses in Alsace, most of which had been won the year before by Bernard

Richelieu's
literary
ambition.

The French
take Alsace,
1639.

of Saxe-Weimar, who died the very year after his greatest victory. About the same time, a French fleet, which Richelieu had for years been building and strengthening, was burning Spanish vessels.

From this time to the end of the war, the French kept the upper hand. Spain, all-powerful in Europe during the previous century, had gradually become so weak that, in 1640, Portugal, which since 1580 had formed part of the Spanish kingdom, declared her independence. France was rapidly becoming, if she had not already become, the foremost state in Europe.

The man who had been the chief means of raising her to this proud position was now drawing near his end. In 1642, there was another attempt made by some of the French nobles to overthrow the great minister. Though he was at the time on a bed of sickness, he not only discovered the plot, but completely defeated it. Two of the nobles perished on the scaffold. A few months later, he himself died at Paris. "There is a great statesman dead," was the remark of Louis XIII. when the news was brought him.

The next year, the king followed his great minister to the grave. A few days later, the French, under the Prince of Condé, one of the most distinguished generals of France, gained a brilliant victory at Rocroy over the Spaniards, who had crossed the borders of the Netherlands and entered France.

The Thirty Years' War was not yet ended, though there had begun to be some talk of peace. The government of France, during the minority of Louis XIV., was in the hands of Cardinal Mazarin, whom Richelieu on his death-bed had

recommended to the king as his successor. Though not by any means so able a statesman as Richelieu, Mazarin, by faithfully carrying out the policy of his great predecessor, maintained for France the high position which she had reached. He was powerfully supported by Turenne, who is regarded as the greatest general of France previous to Napoleon Bonaparte. Turenne was the grandson of William of Orange, who had so nobly won the freedom of Holland, his mother being Elizabeth of Nassau, a daughter of the prince; and he had himself learned his first lessons in the art of war in the Netherlands, fighting under his celebrated uncle, Maurice of Nassau.

It was Turenne who put an end to the Thirty Years' War by his brilliant campaign in Bavaria in 1646-7. The next year, deputies from the different states concerned met at Münster in Westphalia—the town where, nearly nine hundred years before, Charlemagne had been baptized, and his father anointed king—and there the celebrated Treaty of Westphalia was signed, by which the war was formally ended, and the privileges which the Protestants of Germany had enjoyed before the war were secured to them.

Thus the terrible war had come to an end, leaving Germany in a state of desolation from which she did not recover for two centuries; while France, thanks to the wise government of Richelieu, was united and prosperous as she had never been before, and had risen to the foremost place among the kingdoms of Europe—a position which she continued to hold for many years afterwards.

CHAPTER VI.

OLIVER CROMWELL—THE STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN ENGLAND—OVERTHROW OF ABSOLUTE MONARCHY.

THE very year in which Richelieu died, after accomplishing the object of his life—the establishment of absolute monarchy in France—the war broke out in England which was to end in the overthrow of absolute monarchy there.

Long before the outbreak of the war, a struggle had been going on between king and people. Charles I. was in many ways a good man—earnest, dignified, well-meaning; but he was a Stuart, and, like his father and his grandmother before him, he believed devoutly in the divine right of kings to rule according to their own will. Now the time had come in England and Scotland when the divine right of the people and of conscience was to be asserted. From the beginning of his reign, Charles had been in trouble with his parliament. Against the express will of parliament, he had promised Louis XIII. to grant certain concessions to the Roman Catholics in England, in order to secure his marriage with the Princess Henrietta Maria; and he insisted on having as his chief minister a man of whom parliament disapproved—the Duke of Buckingham.

In 1626, when Christian of Denmark was fighting in the cause of the Protestants in Germany, Charles had hastily dissolved his second parliament — which he had summoned in order to obtain the money he had promised to Christian—because it threatened to impeach his favourite, Buckingham; and Christian attributed his disastrous defeat at Lutter to the want of the money which the King of England had promised him. Charles was in sore straits for money: not only did he wish to fulfil his promise to Christian, but it was at this time that he had undertaken to support the French Protestants in Rochelle against their king. Unable to obtain money in the regular way—by a vote of parliament—he had recourse to irregular means of raising it. He ordered a “forced loan” to be collected; and some who refused to pay it were imprisoned.

His second
parliament
dissolved,
1626.

The “forced
loan.”

Charles’s third parliament, which met in March 1628, was one of the most remarkable in the history of England. Its first action was to draw up and present to the king the celebrated Petition of Right. More than four hundred years before, in the reign of King John, the nobles of England, who had suffered many wrongs at the hands of that tyrant, had forced him to sign a document by which the rights and liberties of the people were secured. That document was the Great Charter. The Petition of Right has been called the second Great Charter of England. It was a statement of complaints against certain actions of the king, such as raising forced loans, imposing taxes without consent of parliament, and imprisoning people without stating the cause. Such actions as these the document stated to be illegal, and contrary to the rights of the people. The king, after

The Petition
of Right,
1628.

some hesitation, was obliged by his need of money to allow the petition to become law; and in London bonfires were lit and bells were rung to celebrate the occasion.

In the parliament which passed the Petition of Right there sat for the first time, as member for the town of Huntingdon, the man who was afterwards to rise to the chief place in the government of England—**Oliver Cromwell**. He was then a young man of some nine-and-twenty years, being just about a year older than the king, who was the age of the century. Born while Queen Elizabeth was still reigning, his early childhood was passed during the last lingering years of England's prosperity, before the troubled times of the reigns of the Stuart kings had begun, and while many of the great men who formed the glory of Elizabeth's reign were still alive. His father was the younger son of Sir Henry Cromwell of Hinchinbrook Manor in Huntingdonshire, and owned a farm near the town of Huntingdon, on the borders of the Fen country—the low marshy land that stretches for miles about the Wash, on the east coast of England. Here Oliver was born, in the year 1599—the year in which the poet Spenser died—and here, so far as we know, he lived without change until the beginning of his eighteenth year. On the 23rd of April of the year 1616, he entered the University of Cambridge. It was the day of Shakespeare's death. "The first world-great thing that remains of English history, the literature of Shakespeare, was ending; the second world-great thing that remains of English history, the armed appeal of Puritanism to the invisible God of heaven.....was, so to speak, beginning."

But it was not yet that the career of Oliver Cromwell

was to begin. He does not seem to have distinguished himself in any way during the year he spent at Cambridge. In 1617, he was summoned home by the death of his father, and he did not again return to the university. He was the only son of his mother, and had to take his father's place in the farm. In 1620, we find him married, and settled down to the management of his land. Of the next eight years of his life we know but little—only that he seems to have been greatly troubled in mind, and that the religious beliefs that shaped his after career now took deep root in his heart. He became, what his father had been before him, a deeply earnest Puritan.

Death of his
father.

To understand the position of the Puritans, we must remember that the Reformation in England, which took place in the reign of Henry VIII., was not, like the Reformation in Scotland, a change in doctrine and in the system of church government. It was little more than a break with Rome and the pope. Most of the ritual and ceremony of the Church of Rome was still kept up in the Church of England; the king was regarded as the head of the church, and the bishops were appointed by him. Now, even during the reign of Elizabeth, who herself loved the old forms and ceremonies, there were many people (some who had been driven to Geneva during the reign of Mary, and had adopted the views of Calvin) who desired a purer, simpler form of worship than that of the Church of England. These were called Puritans. Their numbers went on increasing; and early in the reign of James I., they petitioned him to make certain reforms in the church service. James, however, was opposed to the Puritans; Episcopalianism, by which the king was regarded as the head of the church,

Puritanism.

James I.
and the
Puritans.

and had the power to appoint the bishops under him, suited his domineering, autocratic character much better than Presbyterianism, which made the king of no account whatever, and gave all power into the hands of the clergy. "A Scottish presbytery," he said, "agreeth as well with a monarchy as God with the devil."

Despair of seeing the changes in England which they desired drove many of the Puritans to leave the country. Some took refuge in Holland; and in the year of

**Foundation
of New En-
gland, 1620.**

Cromwell's marriage, 1620, the ship *Mayflower* carried one hundred men, women, and children, exiles for conscience' sake, to the inhospitable shores of North America, where they founded the colony of New England, and thus helped to build up the great modern republic of the United States. Ten years later, in 1630, they were joined by a thousand emigrants from the old country, under the leadership of John Winthrop. These were anxious times, not only for the Puritans in England, but for

**Religious
parties in
Europe, 1630.**

Protestants all over Europe. Richelieu had defeated the Protestants at Rochelle, and Christian of Denmark had retired from his campaign in Germany, leaving the Protestants completely at the mercy of their Catholic opponents, as it seemed.

These successes of the Catholic party must have alarmed the Puritans in England for the safety of Protestantism, and the conduct of Charles at the time would not help to lessen their alarm. In spite of having given his consent to the Petition of Right, he was still bent on ruling in his own way, as he had

**The parlia-
ment of 1629.**

been before. When parliament met in 1629, there were complaints that Charles had levied certain duties, in violation of the Petition of Right;

that he had promoted certain clergymen whom parliament had censured; and that certain new forms and ceremonies had been introduced into the church service. It is in this parliament that we have the first evidence of Cromwell having spoken, and it was on the subject of religion that he spoke. On that subject, the house, which seems to have been chiefly composed of Puritans, showed itself to be in deadly earnest—in such deadly earnest that the king thought it wiser to dissolve it, and not to summon it again. For eleven years he governed the country without the help of parliament; for eleven years yet Oliver Cromwell farmed his lands in Huntingdon, and prayed to God, and pondered, and waited his time.

Dissolved.

He was a man of three-and-forty years before his time came. Gustavus Adolphus, who was born only five years before him, had finished a great work, and had died a glorious death on the field of Lützen, at an age five years younger than that of Cromwell when his work began.

Meanwhile many events which helped to shape the future history of Great Britain had taken place both in England and in Scotland. In 1637, two events of the greatest importance happened—the one in England, and the other in Scotland. It was in that year that Charles, who was in want of money for his navy, resolved to raise the tax known as ship-money. By the Petition of Right it had been declared illegal for the king to raise taxes without consent of parliament; but Charles, though he had given his royal assent to that Petition, acted as though it had never been passed. A certain Buckinghamshire squire, named John Hampden, resolved to uphold parliament and the decrees of parliament. He refused to pay the tax, and

**Ship-money
and John
Hampden.**

was in consequence thrown into prison. But by his act he showed, as the parliament showed later, that the time had come when the law could no longer be trampled under foot by any man, even by the king himself.

About the same time, Charles had met in Scotland with a much more serious opposition on the question of religion. In spite of the fact that since 1560 Presby-

**Episcopa-
lianism in
Scotland.**

terianism had been the established religion of Scotland, Charles could not rest without attempting to force upon the people the Episcopalian form of worship, by which he himself held. With the help of Archbishop Laud, who was one of his chief supporters during those eleven years when he governed without a parliament, he had a prayer-book drawn up, which he ordered to be used in the Scottish churches. But the countrymen of Robert Bruce and John Knox were not likely tamely to submit to tyranny, especially on a question of religion; they were not likely to give up without a struggle their right to worship in the way they held best, which their fathers had secured for them after much bitter persecution less than a hundred years before. On the 28th of February 1638, a vast crowd

**The Cove-
nant, 1638.**

of people assembled in the churchyard of Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh, and in their hearing there was read aloud the Solemn Covenant, by which the people of Scotland pledged themselves to uphold the established religion of their country against all opposition. The document was then signed by those present, many of them writing their names with their own blood, and adding the words, "till death." Never in the whole course of her history had the heart of Scotland been so deeply stirred!

The resolution of the Covenanters was soon to be put

to the test. Charles now attempted to force obedience to his will by arms. He assembled an army and marched towards Scotland; but the Scots were ready for him. They had already raised an army, and placed it under the command of Alexander Leslie, who had held Stralsund against Wallenstein, and had risen to the position of field-marshal in the Swedish army. Many of the officers under him, and many even of the private soldiers, were men who had fought in the Thirty Years' War, and had thus gained military experience; while Charles's army was composed for the most part of recruits, ignorant of the art of war, whose hearts were not in the cause for which they were fighting. After some skirmishing, in which the Scots generally had the best of it, when the two armies faced each other near Berwick, Charles thought it wiser to come to a treaty with the Scots, known as the Pacification of Berwick.

War with
the Scots.

Pacification
of Berwick,
1639.

The following year, however, the war again broke out. The Scots marched into England, carrying everything before them, and took up their quarters at Newcastle. The king was forced to enter into negotiations with them; and while these were going on, he was obliged to give his consent to the payment of £850 daily for the expenses of the Scottish army. It was impossible for Charles to meet these claims unaided. A parliament had to be summoned, and met on November 3, 1640. This was the celebrated Long Parliament.

War
renewed,
1640.

The Long Parliament was in no hurry to satisfy the Scots. So long as they remained unsatisfied, and only so long, the king was certain not to dissolve parliament; and parliament had work to do, and did not choose to be dissolved yet. Four

The Long
Parliament,
1640.

able Scottish clergymen came to London as a commission to arrange the treaty; and by their conversation and their eloquent sermons did much to awake the sympathy of the English Puritans, and to rouse a stronger opposition to Episcopalianism and the royal tyranny.

One of the first acts of the Long Parliament was the impeachment of the Earl of Strafford. During the eleven years when Charles ruled the country without a parliament, Sir Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, had been, together with Archbishop Laud, his chief adviser. Strafford was a man of great strength of character and ability, who, in supporting the king as he had done, was no doubt acting in accordance with his principles, and not from any base motive. But he seems to have been somewhat stern and overbearing in manner, which made him unpopular with the common people. As viceroy in Ireland, he had secured peace and prosperity in that country; he built schools and churches, encouraged commerce, established a strong army, and settled English colonists in Connaught. He believed that the only way to make Ireland a peaceful and prosperous nation was to keep up a strong army there, and to introduce large numbers of English settlers. With his character, it was only natural that his sympathy should be with the king, and that he should do all in his power to uphold the royal authority. Throughout his life he was unswervingly loyal to Charles, and his public actions had all been done with the king's approval. It is difficult, therefore, to see how a charge of treason could be made good against him.

But parliament was resolved that there should be no more unparliamentary government in England—that some penalty must be paid for the last eleven years of

royal tyranny. Who was to pay the penalty? who was to be the victim? The real offender was Charles himself; but the time had not yet come when parliament could think of summoning the king to stand his trial before it. So Strafford was made the victim of his loyal service to his sovereign. In spite of the dignity, the skill, the eloquence with which he defended himself, and refuted the charges brought against him, he was sentenced to death. The sentence had to be signed by the king before it could be carried out. For a while Charles hesitated before signing. He had declared that Strafford was innocent of treason; he had assured him, on his royal word, that he would let no harm befall him. Now he was asked to sign the death-warrant of the man to whom he had given these assurances! If only Charles had shown himself as faithful to his minister as that minister had been loyal to him, we should have thought of him now with more respect and admiration. But he yielded, and, though reluctantly, gave his consent to the execution of the truest, ablest minister he ever had. "Put not your faith in princes," were the words of the condemned man when he was told that his king had abandoned him.

**Strafford
sentenced
to death.**

**Charles
consents.**

Events now hurried on with terrible rapidity. Not very much more than a year after Strafford had perished on the scaffold, the king was at open war with his parliament, and had planted his standard at Nottingham, calling upon all his loyal subjects to support their king against the rebels, as he called the parliamentary party. Before sentence was passed on Strafford, the king would gladly have dissolved parliament, as he had dissolved the parliament that threatened to impeach Buckingham; but

**The Civil
War, 1642.**



there was the Scottish army ready to march on London if their claims were not satisfied, and before these claims were satisfied parliament had passed a resolution, declaring that they could not be dissolved without their own consent. Having thus secured themselves against interference, the leading men in parliament were able to bring forward all those measures which they thought necessary to insure national and religious liberty.

About six months after the execution of Strafford, a terrible rebellion broke out in Ireland. The Irish Catholics rose up against the English settlers, and thousands of innocent men and women, and even little children, were cruelly massacred.

**Rebellion in
Ireland.**

The horror and indignation of the English at home were loud and fierce. An army must be sent to Ireland to punish those who had committed such terrible deeds; but could the king be trusted with an army? The leading men in parliament answered no, and they proceeded to show their reasons by drawing up *The Grand Remonstrance*. This was a document giving a sort of history of Charles's reign, and stating all the illegal, unjust, and tyrannical acts of which he had been guilty. Even among the members of parliament there was a large number who were opposed to the document, and it was only after a fierce debate, carried on by candle-light till "the chimes of Margaret's were striking two in the morning," that the Remonstrance was passed by the small majority of eleven. Oliver Cromwell sat in that parliament for Cambridge, and was one of those who voted for the Remonstrance. He was now a man of nearly forty-two years; but though destined to become the ruler of England, he was not yet even one of the leaders of his party.

**The Grand
Remonstrance.**

His cousin, John Hampden, however—the same who had refused to pay ship-money—was one of the leaders. Him the king resolved to get rid of, together with John Pym and three other members of the House of Commons, and one member of the House of Lords. Against these six he brought an accusation of treason, charging them with having “invited” the Scots to invade En-

Attempt to seize the five members. gland the year before, and with other traitorous actions, and demanding that they should be delivered up to stand their trial as traitors.

His demand was not complied with by parliament. The following day, accompanied by some five hundred armed men, he went to the House of Commons, and there demanded that the five members should be given up to him. But the house had been warned what to expect, and the five members were not present. As the king moved away, indignant cries of “Privilege!” followed him.

After that, there could be no hope of peace between king and parliament, and soon both began to make preparations for war. In the beginning of March 1642, Charles had left London, and

Preparations for war. was moving northwards; while his queen, the spirited daughter of Henry IV. of France, had set out for Holland, carrying with her many of her jewels, to be exchanged for men and arms. The parliament, too, in these early months of 1642, was busy raising troops; and large sums of money, quantities of silver plate, and even women’s silver thimbles (they could well content themselves with brass ones at such a time!) were eagerly contributed for the purpose.

It is now that we begin to see more of Cromwell—contributing money to put down the rebellion in Ireland, raising volunteer companies in Cambridge, and

sending arms there. At first he appears in the records of the time as "Mr. Cromwell," then as "Captain Cromwell," and later as "Colonel Cromwell." In about a year from the time when parliament first began to make preparations for war, this farmer of three-and-forty years, who, so far as we know, had previously had no military experience or knowledge whatever, had raised himself by his zeal, strength of character, and military genius, to a high position in the new army.

By the time that Cromwell had become colonel, the first battle had been fought between the king's forces and those of parliament—the battle of Edgehill, a battle of no great importance, which was claimed as a victory by both sides. It was after this battle that Cromwell remarked to his cousin, Colonel Hampden (ship-money Hampden), that the parliamentary forces, so long as they were composed of tapsters and worn-out serving-men, could not hope to cope with those of the king, which were made up largely of the younger sons of gentlemen—men of honour, trained in manly exercises. Only by enlisting men who were filled with zeal for the religious cause for which they were fighting could parliament hope to be equal with the king. Hampden thought it would be well if such men could be enlisted, but he feared it was hopeless to attempt to find them. Cromwell held that it was "necessary, and therefore to be done." At once he began forming his own troop on this principle, refusing to admit into it any man whose whole heart was not in the cause for which he was to fight, and thus gradually gathering around him his celebrated regiment of "Ironsides," as they were called, who won for parliament the first

Cromwell
levies
recruits.

Battle of
Edgehill,
1642.

Cromwell's
"Ironsides."

important battle of the Civil War—that of Marston Moor.

Much had happened before that battle, which was fought in July 1644. John Hampden had been killed in a skirmish; Pym, the parliamentary leader, had died; and parliament had signed the Scottish Solemn League and Covenant, in order to secure the help of the Scots on the only terms on which it could be obtained. A Scottish army under Leslie, now Earl of Leven, had crossed the border into England in the spring of 1644, and had taken part in the battle of Marston Moor.

But it was not the Scots who gained the glory of that day. The chief leader of the king's forces was his nephew, the bold, dashing Prince Rupert, son of the Elector Palatine and of Charles's sister, Elizabeth. When he threw his cavalry against the centre of the parliamentary army, where most of the Scots were stationed, it wavered, and broke up, and fled; but when he attacked the left wing, where Cromwell's Ironsides were placed, the attack was soon changed into a retreat, and Prince Rupert's splendid cavalry were fleeing before the Ironsides. "God made them as stubble to our swords," writes Cromwell, a day or two afterwards. The words occur in a letter to his brother-in-law, whose son had perished in the battle. Cromwell, too, had lost a son about that time—his eldest son, Oliver, a young man of twenty; and it is touching to see how he puts aside both his own sorrow and his own triumph in writing to the bereaved father, describing the incidents connected with his son's death, and dwelling on the comforting thought that he would now "never know sin or sorrow any more."

Less than a year after Marston Moor, the armies of

king and parliament faced each other once more—this time at Naseby in Northamptonshire. Cromwell had now become lieutenant-general. An ordinance had been passed by parliament, on the suggestion of Cromwell himself, known as the Self-denying Ordinance, which forbade any member either of the House of Commons or of the House of Lords to hold command in the army; but this ordinance had been suspended in favour of Cromwell, who had become so necessary to the army that he could not be spared. The parliamentary army had been re-organized after the manner of Cromwell's Ironsides, and was called the New Model. It was composed of Puritans—men whose hearts were in the cause for which they were fighting, and for whom the religious questions of the day had the deepest interest. As at Marston Moor, Prince Rupert at first gained some advantage for the king by the charge of his cavalry; but in the end the victory remained with the parliamentary army. The king was completely defeated, and forced to take to flight. He was never again able to face the assembled forces of parliament in open field.

**Battle of
Naseby,
1645.**

After this battle, the strong places which had been held for the king fell one by one into the hands of the parliamentary party. In 1646, Charles fled to the camp of the Scots at Newark for protection. Even there, however, he carried on secret intrigues and correspondence with the different parties in the kingdom.

**Charles with
the Scots,
1646.**

Those opposed to Charles in England and Scotland did not now form one united party, but were divided into two great parties, the Presbyterians and the Independents. In order to secure the help of the Scottish army before

**Presby-
terians and
Independ-
ents.**

the battle of Marston Moor, the English parliament had agreed that Presbyterianism should be the established religion of England, and had signed the Scottish Covenant. But large numbers of the English Puritans were not Presbyterians: what these wanted was freedom of conscience—liberty to worship in the way they thought right.

The New Model army—formed on the model of Cromwell's "Ironsides"—was composed chiefly of Independents. In all history we do not read of such another army as this: it was not made up of merely fighting men, trained and disciplined, and ready to fight or march or retreat at their commander's bidding; but officers and soldiers down to the humblest in the ranks were men full of zeal for the cause for which they were fighting, convinced that they were instruments in the hands of God for securing the laws of their country against tyranny, and obtaining freedom of conscience for the people. We read that in their moments of leisure in camp, instead of drinking and gaming, and making rude jokes, they held discussions on religious questions, and sometimes expounded passages of Scripture. They were in deadly earnest, and their earnestness joined to their force made them irresistible. By means of the plan which Hampden had thought impracticable—that of enrolling as soldiers only those men whose hearts were in the cause they fought for—Cromwell had forged a terrible weapon, which was to carve out the future destiny of England.

Negotiations between king and parliament. Early in 1647, the Scots gave up Charles to the English parliament, and retired to their own country. Negotiations for peace now began between Charles and parliament, one of the terms of which was that the king should re-

cognize Presbyterianism as the religion of the country. Charles had no intention of abiding by these terms; he only put off time, hoping that Presbyterians and Independents would come to blows, and that when they had sufficiently weakened each other, he would be able to regain his old position. But the army took fright; they did not choose that a treaty should be made on the terms offered by parliament. One evening a party of horse, headed by a certain Cornet Joyce, Charles in
the hands of
the army. rode up to Holmby House in Northamptonshire, where the king had been placed by parliament, and carried him off to Newmarket, where the army was stationed. Negotiations now began between king and army; but nothing was settled. One night Charles made his escape from his captors, and took refuge in the Isle of Wight. While there, he entered into a secret treaty with the Scots, at the same time that he was carrying on negotiations with the English parliament. By this treaty, he promised to support Presbyterianism in England for three years, and to put down the Independents, in return for which the Scots were to give him an army to regain the throne for him.

So this is the state of England in April 1648—a Scottish army of 40,000 men, under the Duke of Hamilton, is marching into the northern counties; royalists are rising in Wales, in England in
1648. Devon and Cornwall, and in Kent; parliament, with its Presbyterian majority, is at feud with the New Model army; and apprentices in London are making riots there; while the king, in confinement at the Isle of Wight, is carrying on negotiations with the different parties without the slightest intention of keeping faith with any of them. His end is coming

very near now, though he little thinks it, though he believes that he has played off the parties in the country against each other so well that soon he will be restored to all his old royal state and power. But before the Scottish army has crossed the border, the

**Meeting of
the army
leaders.**

chiefs of the New Model have met in solemn conclave at Windsor Castle, and there, as we read in the words of one of their number, they seek by anxious thought and discussion, by earnest prayer, to discover what sins of theirs "had provoked the Lord against us, to bring such sad perplexities upon us at that day." Oliver Cromwell is among them, and solemnly addresses them. Three days they meet; and on the third, this is the conclusion they reach—that God has sent these new troubles upon them for their sin in having treated with the king, "that man of blood;" and "that it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for that blood he had shed, and mischief he had done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and his people in these poor nations."

This was their decision, solemnly reached and solemnly carried out later. But meantime there was other work to do. Cromwell with an army marched into Wales; and then, having put down the insurrection there, advanced northwards to meet the Scottish army.

**Battle of
Preston,
1648.**

Near Preston in Lancashire the two armies faced each other—the Scottish army about twenty-one thousand strong, that of Cromwell only some nine thousand; but after three days of fighting, the twenty-one thousand Scots are slain, or made prisoners, or scattered over the country. It was a great victory for Cromwell. A few days later, General Fairfax, the commander-in-chief of the English army, put

an end to the royalist rising in Kent. The second Civil War was now over.

Negotiations were reopened at Newport in the Isle of Wight between the king and the parliament; but the army was resolved that no treaty should be concluded with the king. On 20th November, they presented a Remonstrance to parliament, petitioning that no agreement be concluded with the king. The parliament paid no heed to the document. A few days later, the king was carried off by the army from the Isle of Wight to Hurst Castle on the coast of Sussex. At first, Charles thought that it was intended to assassinate him; but it was not by any secret dark deed that the army meant to carry out the resolution reached after three days of prayer and earnest meditation. Believing themselves to be an instrument in the hands of God, they were resolved to carry out the work given them to do in the light of day—Charles Stuart, “that man of blood,” was to be openly tried by parliament.

But before Charles could be brought before parliament for trial, those members must be got rid of who were unfavourable to the views of the army. **Pride’s Purge,** On the 6th December, Colonel Pride was stationed with a regiment at the doors of the House of Commons, and as each of the Presbyterian members arrived and tried to enter he was resolutely turned back. When asked by what commission he was acting, Colonel Pride pointed to the lines of soldiers with their drawn swords. Ninety-six were turned back, and forty-seven others were afterwards arrested. By “Pride’s Purge,” as it was afterwards called, parliament was reduced to some fifty members. The evening of the day on which it had taken place, Crom-

**Remon-
strance of
the army.**

Pride’s Purge,
December 6,
1648.

well returned to London from the north, having marched into Scotland after the battle of Preston; and he now took his seat in parliament. He was present when what was left of parliament passed a resolution that the king should be brought to trial; he was present when, the House of Lords having refused to sanction that resolution, the Commons declared themselves to be the supreme power in England, independent of king and Lords; he was present when, in January 1649, the king was brought to stand his trial.

A special High Court of Justice had been appointed for the trial, and Cromwell formed one of the members.

The court was composed of about one hundred and thirty members; but many of these were not present during the trial, and only some fifty-nine signed the warrant for Charles's execution. In the face of the world, this mere handful of men, without legal authority, solemnly tried and sentenced their king. Never in the course of history had such a thing been done. The nations of Europe looked on in breathless wonder, but did not offer to interfere. France might have been expected to make an effort to save the king; but though the Peace of Westphalia had, the year before, put an end to the Thirty Years' War, France was still at war with Spain, and the insurrection known as the *Fronde* had before this broken out in Paris.

On the 30th January 1649, Charles Stuart, King of Great Britain and Ireland, was beheaded at Whitehall by the order of a small body of his subjects, and in sight of a horror-stricken crowd.

Execution of
Charles.

To the end he showed himself calm, grave, and dignified. All along he refused to recognize the authority of the court which had sentenced him, but

declared that he was justly punished for having allowed an unjust sentence to be executed on Strafford. This one action of his life he seems to have repented bitterly ; but he had no penitence for the actions which had really brought him to the scaffold—for the way in which he had tried to force the conscience of the people, and had trampled upon the laws and liberties of the nation. Again and again he had shown that he was not to be bound by his promises, nor by the laws of the country ; and by his obstinate determination to rule by his own royal will, and in defiance of parliament, he had brought upon the kingdom the horrors of a civil war, and had caused the death of hundreds of innocent people.

There can be no doubt that it was for those reasons that Cromwell and the other judges found him deserving of death. Only the solemn belief that they were carrying out the will of God, in putting to death the man who had been guilty of so much bloodshed, can account for the stern daring of this small band of men. There were those among them who believed that to leave the king unpunished was to bring down upon the whole nation the just vengeance of God. What Cromwell thought on the subject is plainly seen in a letter, written about two months before the king's execution, in which he says that to restore Charles to power would be to lose "the whole fruit of the war," and that everything would "turn to what it was, and worse."

Reasons
for it.

About three months after the king's death, an act was published declaring that England was now a Commonwealth or free state, and that it should henceforth be governed by the representatives of the people in parliament, without king or House of Lords. For some time before this act ap-

England a
Common-
wealth.

peared, Cromwell had been kept busy marching here and there to put down the mutinies which broke out in the army all over the country. Three months later

**Cromwell
in Ireland.**

he set out for Ireland with an army to crush the rebellion there. There are letters written by him on board the ship that was taking him to Ireland. They were addressed to his daughter-in-law and her father, and are full of affectionate consideration and of religious counsel. And he was then on his way to commit what has been laid to his charge as the cruellest action of his life—the storming of Drogheda. This town was held by the flower of the Irish army. As they refused to surrender when summoned by Cromwell, he would allow no quarter, and all who carried arms were relentlessly put to death. At the storming of Wexford, some time after, the same thing happened. Cromwell has been much blamed for his cruelty on these occasions; but, as he himself writes, he believed that by acting as he did he was preventing “the effusion of blood for the future.” At any rate, he suffered none to be put to death save those bearing arms; while in the great massacre eight years before, which he had come to avenge, men, women, and children had been slain without distinction. And this too must be said in his favour, that unlike the generals in the Thirty Years’ War, he did all in his power to protect the lives and property of all peaceable citizens, issuing a declaration that any soldier in his army found robbing or plundering should be severely punished.

Before the affairs of Ireland were quite settled, Cromwell was summoned back to England. Troubles had arisen in Scotland, and the great general could not be spared. On the last day of May 1650,

**Return to
London.**

he was once more in London, where he was

received by solemn processions, with firing of cannon, and with shouts of joy. Crowds came out to see his triumphant progress. "Yes; but if it were to see me hanged, how many more there would be!" he is said to have remarked.

Scarcely a month after this triumphant entry of Cromwell into the southern capital of Great Britain, bells were ringing in the northern capital, Edinburgh, and bonfires blazing, to celebrate the entry of the new King of Scotland, Charles II., the eldest son of the late king. For some time back Charles, safe in Holland, had been carrying on negotiations, both with Scotland and with the royalists in Ireland. He would perhaps have preferred to come to Ireland rather than to Scotland, for the Scots insisted that he must swear to the Covenant if he was to be their king, and he hated Presbyterianism; but after the conquest of Ireland by Cromwell, only Scotland was left to him. So, much against his will, he swore to the Covenant, and was acknowledged King of the Scots.

Charles II.
in Scotland.

But he was not long to hold that position. A few days after he had been proclaimed king, Cromwell was marching northwards with an army. The Scottish army, under David Leslie, held a strong position about Edinburgh. Cromwell advanced as far as the outskirts of the city, and gave the enemy several opportunities for attacking him, of which they refused to take advantage. The English army was suffering from sickness, and from scarcity of provisions. Cromwell was obliged to retire to Dunbar, where English vessels containing supplies were lying. Leslie now sallied out of his intrenchments and followed the enemy. He took up a strong position on a hill above Dunbar, commanding the only road by which Cromwell

Cromwell in
Scotland.

could march southwards. His army was more than twenty thousand strong, the men in good condition, and supplies not wanting. Cromwell's army scarcely numbered twelve thousand men, weakened many of them by want for some time back. It seemed as if the situation of the English were hopeless. But on the 2nd September, Cromwell sees that the enemy are descending the hill; he sees, too, the advantage of attacking them when they reach the level ground. He resolves to attack the following morning. So in the gray light of the morning of 3rd September the attack begins; and when the sun shines out upon the scene, it is plain to all that the Scots are giving way. "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered!" Cromwell was heard to cry. And if the Scots were indeed the enemies of God, his prayer was answered, for soon they were scattered over the face of the country, and ten thousand of them were taken prisoners. It was another splendid victory for Cromwell.

One more he was yet to have. Scotland south of the Forth was in his hands, but in the north a new army was gradually gathering round the new king. Charles believed that if he marched into England with this army crowds of royalists would flock to his standard, and enable him to regain the crown his father had worn. Early in August 1651, he began his march southwards; but the crowds of armed men he expected did not flock to his aid, and by the end of the month Cromwell had overtaken him at Worcester. On the anniversary of

Battle of Dunbar—3rd September—the two armies met in battle, and after a "stiff contest for four or five hours," Charles was totally defeated, and fled for his life. For a time he remained concealed amid the branches of an oak tree, while

troopers were scouring the country in search of him ; and for about six weeks he had to lie in hiding, and skulk about the country in disguise, till he at length succeeded in getting a ship to convey him out of the country.

The battle of Worcester was the last which Cromwell was called upon to fight ; it was, as he said himself, “ a crowning mercy.” But the seven years of life that yet remained to him were full of important events for him and for England. The government of England was at the time of Worcester still in the hands of what remained of the Long Parliament after Pride’s Purge. It consisted of only some fifty or sixty members, and was contemptuously called the “ Rump.” This small body of men was no fit representative of the nation, and it had long been decided that it must be dissolved and a new parliament summoned. But it seemed in no hurry to dissolve itself ; indeed, the active members of it appeared to have the intention of making their power perpetual. They proposed that they should not dissolve at all, but that new members should be added to their number. Cromwell and the army, as well as many private people, were indignant at such a proposal. To permit parliament to become perpetual was to set up a new tyranny in the place of the royal tyranny which they had laboured to put down. And there was no lack of complaints against the Rump for many acts of injustice and favouritism, such as placing in the highest offices of state men who had no better qualification than that of being related to some member of parliament. Petitions against abuses permitted by parliament were sent to the army from all sides. Plainly the Rump must go. So one morning in April 1653, when they are discussing a bill

**The Rump
Parliament.**

by which they are to continue in power, only adding to their number, Cromwell, after sitting silent in his place for some time, rises and tells them in emphatic language that their time has come. "It is not fit that you should sit here any longer!" he says. "You have sat here too long for any good you have been doing lately." And as he speaks there enters a company of his regiment, armed. So the Rump retires, followed by the fiery words of the lord general.

In all his life, this was the boldest action Cromwell ever did. He was only general of the army, and had no legal right to dissolve parliament. But he believed he held a higher than legal right—most earnestly he believed that he was acting as the instrument of God. "I have sought the Lord night and day," he said, "that he would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work." But he was "put upon the doing of the work;" and so he did it faithfully and unflinchingly.

Dissolved by Cromwell. In judging Cromwell, we must not leave out of sight that speech of his; it gives us the **Cromwell's character.** key-note of his character, the true solution of the strange riddle of his life. Many people during his lifetime, and almost all mankind for centuries afterwards, believed him to have been only a powerful, ambitious, unscrupulous hypocrite. But a more careful study in recent years of his actions, his letters, and his speeches has shown him to us as he was: a man filled with a sense of the nearness of God—a fanatic, if you will—who at every step in his career felt himself impelled by the divine will, even at times against his own.

In the end of 1653, the assembly which he had summoned after the dissolution of the Rump (sometimes known as "Barebone's Parliament," from the name of

one of the members), finding the government of the country too much for them, resigned their powers after sitting for five months. An Instrument of Government was then drawn up, in which Cromwell was named Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, with a Council of State to assist him in the government. Three years later the title of king was offered to him, but he declined it.

**He becomes
protector,
1653.**

He was now nearing his end ; his health was broken, and he suffered much. He was not yet an old man—only some fifty-nine years when he died—but during the last sixteen years of his life he had, as he said himself, borne “a burden too heavy for man ;” body, mind, and soul of the man had been worn as perhaps no other’s ever had been before. During his last years there were many plots against his life, always discovered and defeated. He had spent his life and energies in the service of God and his country ; he had secured for the people civil rights and freedom of conscience ; he had made England great and prosperous—feared and respected abroad as she had not been during the last two reigns, nor even in the famous age of Elizabeth : yet it is doubtful if he ever gained the heart of the nation, if by the mass of the people he was ever regarded as anything but an interloper.

**Cromwell’s
last days.**

In his foreign policy he took up a position opposed to Spain, and once more, as in the days of Drake, English vessels swept the Spanish seas, and carried off the treasure of the Spanish mines in the New World. During the Commonwealth, England gained great glory at sea under her famous admiral, Blake, who won his laurels by defeating the two great

**His foreign
policy.**

Dutch admirals, Van Tromp and De Ruyter. The island of Jamaica was gained for England, which thus secured a footing in the West Indies. In the same year in which this island was taken, Cromwell entered into a treaty with France, to assist her in her war with Spain in the Spanish Netherlands. Before the treaty was signed, a horrible massacre took place among the valleys and hills of Piedmont in the north of Italy.

The massacre in Piedmont, 1655. Thousands of people, guilty of no crime but

that of being Protestants, were cruelly murdered, or driven from their homes, by armed men at the bidding of the Duke of Savoy. Cromwell is said to have wept tears of pity and indignation when the news reached him, and he refused to sign the treaty with France, which was of some importance to him, until the king promised to help him in doing justice to these poor homeless people. Not content with this, he sent the outcasts £2,000 out of his own pocket, appointed a collection throughout England, and wrote to all the Protestant states in Europe, calling upon them to help in righting this great wrong. The great poet, John Milton, who was Cromwell's Latin secretary, expressed his indignation at the wrong-doers and his sympathy with the sufferers in his magnificent sonnet, beginning,—

“Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold.”

On this occasion Cromwell showed that he meant to be the protector, not only of England, but of persecuted Protestants everywhere.

While he thus made his name respected and feared abroad, at home in his last years he had many troubles and anxieties—with his parliaments, and with the different parties in the country. In 1658, a great family

misfortune came upon him—his favourite daughter, Elizabeth, Lady Claypole, died after a painful illness. We are told that for fourteen days the protector sat by her bedside in Hampton Court, unable to take any interest in public affairs. It is said, too, that in her ravings she talked much of past events—of the right of the king, and the innocent blood spilled, in a way that must have much distressed her father. He was then in broken health, nearing his own death, which followed hers in less than a month. He died on his “lucky day,” the anniversary of Dunbar and Worcester—the 3rd September. On his death-bed he was heard oftener than once to exclaim, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!” All his talk was of the mysterious ways of Providence, and often he prayed earnestly. His enemies said that his conscience troubled him for all the wrong he had done ; and when, a day or two before he died, a terrible storm burst over the city, they said it was the devil come to fetch his own. And yet, when now we read the story of his life, his letters, and his speeches, we feel sure that if ever there was a man who, in every action of his life, at least *sought* earnestly to be guided by the will of God, that man was Oliver Cromwell.

Death of
Lady Clay-
pole.

Death of
Cromwell,
1658.

Cromwell

CHAPTER VII.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON—DISCOVERY OF THE LAW OF GRAVITATION.

WHILE the terrible storm spoken of in the last chapter was howling in the dying ears of the Lord Protector of England, away in a quiet country place in Lincolnshire a lad not yet sixteen was trying to measure its force in a rude way of his own. He took a long leap *with* the wind, and another *against* it; measured the length of each; compared these measurements with the length of a leap taken on a calm day, and was thus able to make some calculation of the force of the storm. That lad was Isaac Newton, the discoverer of the law of Universal Gravitation, perhaps the greatest scientific genius that has ever lived. He was born in Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire in the year 1642, and his early childhood was passed during the troubled times which have just been described; but we cannot find from his biography that the great events going on around him made any impression on the boy. When we turn from the study of Cromwell's life to that of Newton's, we feel as if we had suddenly stepped into a sheltered nook after having been battling with a fierce wind. It is difficult to realize that, in the midst of so much civil strife and

commotion, the round of everyday life was going on in its calm, uneventful way; but the story of Newton's boyhood helps us to do so.

His father, who owned the small manor of Wools-
thorpe, died before Isaac was born, and the little in-
fant (he is said to have been so small that he His parent-
age and
early life. could go into a quart mug!) was left entirely
to his mother's care. Before he was three
years old, however, early in the year of Naseby, 1645,
she married for the second time, and his grandmother
took charge of him. From that time till he was twelve
years old we find but little recorded of him—there are
no anecdotes showing any unusual precocity on the part
of the future discoverer.

When he was twelve, he was sent to a public school
in the town of Grantham, some six miles distant from
Woolsthorpe. Here, so far from distinguish-
ing himself at first, he occupied, as we are At school.
told, the lowest seat in his class. What first roused his
ambition was a kick in the stomach given him by the
boy just above him. Newton indignantly challenged
the boy to fight, and after school hours the two retired
to the churchyard and had it out together. Newton
was the smaller and slighter of the two, but his superior
spirit enabled him to give the other a thorough good
beating. The incident awoke in Newton the desire to
beat his opponent in learning as well as in fight; so he
set himself diligently to study, and gradually made his
way to the top of the class, and afterwards to the head
of the school.

Even in his school days he showed traces of his sci-
entific genius. In his spare hours he occupied himself
much in making all sorts of ingenious contrivances, never
taking part in the games of his school-fellows. He

made a model windmill, which is described as a “clean and curious piece of workmanship;” and he ^{His} ~~mechanical~~ ^{models.} also constructed a water-clock in his own room, which the members of the household often consulted. Besides this, he drove wooden pegs into the walls and roofs in the yard of the house in which he lived, to show by their shadows the hours and half-hours of the day; and so exact did he succeed in making them, after long observations, that it was easy to tell the time by “Isaac’s dial,” as the arrangement was called. We hear, too, that he drew and painted as well as carved and hammered, and that he even tried his “’prentice hand” at verse-making; but none of his verses exist now.

In 1656, his mother, who had lost her second husband, and taken up her abode at Woolsthorpe, took him away from school. She seems to have intended him to become a farmer and to cultivate her little property; but the boy soon showed that he was not fitted for such work. When he was sent out to look after the cattle or the sheep, he would be found sitting under a tree with a book, or shaping some wooden model, or perhaps testing the force of the wind by leaping, as we have seen he did on the day of the great storm. His uncle, a clergyman, is said to have one day found the boy sitting under a hedge working out a mathematical problem, and to have told his mother that he should be sent to Cambridge. So once more Isaac ^{He goes to} ~~Cambridge,~~ ^{1661.} went back to Grantham to prepare for Cambridge, where he seems to have entered Trinity College in 1661.

During those years when he was quietly studying at Grantham for Cambridge, great political changes were taking place in the country. Cromwell was succeeded

in the protectorate by his eldest surviving son, Richard, a man of no great talent or strength of character. He did not long hold his office. The strength of Oliver's position as protector had depended, not only on his extraordinary force of character, but on the fact that he had the support of the army, of which he was commander-in-chief. It was impossible for any man to hold the position of protector without being at the same time head of the army—the only real power at that time in the country. Now the army refused to recognize Richard Cromwell as their head, though they were willing to recognize him as civil protector. The parliament which Richard summoned in January 1659 recognized him as protector, with all the authority which his father had enjoyed. The majority of them held that it would never do to permit the military power to be quite independent of the civil. The leaders of the army, after assembling troops in London, demanded the dissolution of parliament. Richard was forced to grant their demand. The army now recalled the remnant of the Long Parliament, which Oliver Cromwell had dissolved in 1653. This body at once declared their resolution to restore the Commonwealth, and to do away with the rule of any single person, and with the House of Peers. In May 1659, Richard Cromwell resigned his office of protector, and retired into private life, for which alone he was fitted, with a large pension. His brother Henry, a man of much superior talents and energy, resigned the command of the army in Ireland which he held, and also withdrew into private life, a suitable provision being made for him by parliament. Fleetwood, the husband of Oliver's daughter Bridget, was, on the demand of the army itself, appointed its commander-in-chief.

Political
events,
1658-1661.

The Long
Parliament
recalled.

But even the parliament which had been restored to power and the army which had restored it could not long agree together. During the summer of 1659, when there were royalist risings all over England, army and parliament managed to keep at peace; but after the last of these risings had been completely crushed at Winnington Bridge by the army under Major-General Lambert, disagreements once more arose on the question of the independence of the army, and its right to petition parliament. These disagreements reached a climax in October of this eventful year, 1659. Parliament was about to pass some resolutions which would strip the army of the independence it claimed. Lambert, the leading spirit of the English army at this time, and an able officer, who had always been looked on as second only to the great Cromwell himself, held a council of officers, at which it was agreed that a parliament which sought to pass such measures was not to be put up with. Once more again troops marched upon London, and the Long Parliament was expelled. Parliament was again expelled.

The officers now appointed a committee for the temporary government of the country, composed of several of their own number and a few civilians. But there was one very powerful general who did not agree with the views of Lambert and the other officers of the English army. This was General Monk, who had been left by Cromwell in command of the army in Scotland. He had assured the parliament, when troubles began, that he would support its authority against the pretensions of Lambert and the other officers of the English army. On the first day of the year 1660, he crossed the borders of Scotland and England, and marched southwards with his army.

Lambert had advanced to meet him; but his troops gradually fell away from him, and at length he found himself almost deserted. The whole nation had become sick of the rule of an armed force, and even among the soldiers of the army a desire for the support of the civil authority was beginning to be felt. Without a parliament to raise supplies, the pay of the army became a matter of difficulty. A few days before Monk crossed the border, some regiments in the neighbourhood of London had surrounded the house of the Speaker of the Rump Parliament, and had expressed, through their officers, their sorrow for having broken up the sittings of parliament. Once more the members of the Rump resumed their seats.

Meantime Monk was marching towards London. He was an extremely reserved and silent man, and for long it was uncertain how he would act. But at length he decided the fate of England by insisting that the members who had been excluded from parliament in 1648 by "Pride's Purge" should be recalled. The first act of these men, when they once more took their seats in the house, was to repeal all that had been done there since their exclusion. The Commonwealth was now at an end. A new parliament—convention rather, as it was not called together by a sovereign—which met in April, contained many royalist members; negotiations were entered into with the son of the late king; and on the 29th May, less than nine years after he had escaped the observation of Cromwell's troopers among the branches of the celebrated oak tree, he entered London amid the greatest pomp and rejoicings. Only a few months later, on the anniversary of the execution of Charles I., the body of Oliver Cromwell, with those of his

The excluded
members of
parliament
recalled.

The
Restoration,
1660.

son-in-law Ireton and Bradshaw, who had been president of the Court that condemned the king, was dug up and hung on the gallows at Tyburn. The three corpses were then beheaded, and the heads set up on poles in Westminster Hall.

Newton at
Cambridge.

That was in 1661, the year in which Newton entered Trinity College, Cambridge. During these exciting times, he had been calmly pursuing his studies at Grantham, without allowing himself to be disturbed by what was going on around him. It is not till 1687 that we find him taking any interest in public affairs, and then only because the rights of the university to which he belonged had been attacked. From 1661, when he entered Cambridge, till 1687, the life of Newton is only the history of his studies, his inventions, and the publication of his great works. It was during these years that his greatest discoveries were made. He lived to be about eighty-five years of age; but though his latter years were by no means idle or unprofitable, it was before his forty-sixth year that his most important work was done.

In the year 1665, there broke out in England a terrible pestilence, known as *the Plague*, and the students at Cambridge were in consequence dispersed. Newton seems to have gone home to Woolsthorpe; and it was

while he was there that the idea, which was afterwards to develop into his great discovery, first occurred to him. One day, as he was sitting alone in the garden, he noticed an apple drop from a tree to the ground. Now, of course, the mere sight was nothing new or unfamiliar to him. From his childhood he had known, as the earliest races of mankind had known, that all bodies, if unsupported, fall to the ground. But not into one of the millions of

human minds that had puzzled and pondered in the bygone centuries had the thought ever entered which now flashed into that of this young man of three and twenty—the thought that the force which ordered the whole physical universe, which ruled the course of the moon and shaped the orbits of the planets, was the same as that which made the apple fall!

He at once attempted to prove this theory by showing that it explained the motion of the moon round the earth. He knew what was the force of gravity at the earth's surface, and he knew also the law of the motion of the planets round the sun. To prove that the force which kept them in their orbits was gravity, he must be able to show that it explained the law of their motion—he must be able to show that the force of gravity *varied inversely as the square of the distance*, or that it was *four times greater at half the distance*. In the case of the moon, what he had to prove was that the force which drew her into her orbit was less than that of gravity at the earth's surface by the *square of her distance* from the earth's centre. Unfortunately he had employed a wrong measurement of the distance of the moon from the earth, though it was not till long after that he found he had done so; meanwhile, he entirely gave up the subject, and devoted himself to other studies.

Long before he had established the theory of gravitation, he had made public another discovery scarcely less important—his discovery of the nature of light and colours. Before his time, men were wonderfully ignorant as to what colours were. Perhaps the most general opinion was that colours were not *in light itself*, but were caused by the action of the different bodies on which it fell.

His calculations fail.

Discoveries with regard to light and colours.

Newton, however, by means of a series of experiments with prisms, carried on during the years 1668–9, proved that all the colours known to us are contained in white light—that white light is not *simple*, but is made up of a number of different rays. These rays, on passing from one medium to another—from air into water, say—are differently bent or *refracted*, and thus become separated from one another. It is for this reason that, when we let light pass through a prism, we see that it becomes broken up into a number of coloured bands or stripes. The beautiful colours of the rainbow also Newton explained in this way.

Though he seems to have made these discoveries about 1668–9, they did not become public till about 1672. Like almost all great discoveries, they at first met with much opposition, and Newton, much against his inclination, had to carry on a controversy with several scientific men. Meantime, he had been appointed professor of mathematics at Cambridge, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, which had been founded some nine or ten years before.

Some fifteen years after the publication of his discoveries in optics, Newton's greatest work, the *Principia*, or Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy, was published. It was in the very year in which this great work appeared that its author first took any part in public affairs. Two years before, in 1685, Charles II. had died, and had been succeeded by his brother, James, Duke of York, as James II. The twenty-five years of Charles's reign had left England and Scotland in a very inferior condition to that into which Cromwell had brought them. Charles was a gay, in-

Con-
troversies.

Publication
of the "*Prin-
cipia*," 1687.

Reign of
Charles II.

dolent, unprincipled man, caring only for his own pleasures, and nothing at all for the honour and welfare of the country of which he was king. His example had brought into fashion at home a fast, dissipated manner of life, totally different from the stern, earnest morality of the Puritans; and his selfish and deceitful foreign policy had entirely lost for England the proud position which she had held abroad during the Commonwealth. The most powerful monarch of Europe at this time was Louis XIV., whose ambition threatened the peace and prosperity of the rest of Europe in the seventeenth century, as that of Spain had done in the sixteenth. To oppose his schemes, England formed with Holland and Sweden the *Triple Alliance*. Two years later, Charles entered into a secret treaty with Louis, known as the *Treaty of Dover*, by which he undertook to support France against Holland in return for a yearly pension which Louis promised to pay him as long as the war lasted! It was impossible for a country, whose king was willing to receive bribes for playing into the hands of a powerful rival monarch, long to hold a high place among the nations.

Besides undermining by his example the morality of his subjects, and lowering through his unprincipled greed the position of his country abroad, Charles stirred up in England, and still more in Scotland, the old troubles about religion. In 1662, parliament passed the *Act of Uniformity*, by which all clergymen who refused to be ordained as Episcopalians and to renounce the Covenant were forced to give up their livings. More than a thousand clergymen, many of them the most learned and pious men in the church, were in consequence deprived of

**Triple
Alliance and
Treaty of
Dover.**

**Act of Uni-
formity,
1662.**

their livings, and were forbidden to preach, or in any way to officiate as clergymen, under a penalty of fine or imprisonment. In Scotland, the opposition

Opposition
to Presby-
terianism in
Scotland.

to Presbyterianism took an even more violent form. Charles was entirely forgetful of the oath he had sworn to observe the Covenant

when, in 1650, he, a mere exile, was warmly received by the Scots and crowned as their king. One would have thought that the memory of Dunbar and Worcester would have kept alive in his heart a feeling of gratitude toward the subjects of his northern kingdom; but Charles had no memory for past services. The very year after

his restoration, the Marquis of Argyle, who
Execution
of Argyle,
1661.

in 1650 had been most active in bringing Charles to Scotland and having him crowned, was hanged as a traitor in Edinburgh on various false charges, the real reason being that he was the leader of the Presbyterians. Other executions followed that of Argyle, for Charles had contrived to fill all the offices of state with unscrupulous men who were opposed to Presbyterianism, or who pretended to be for their own selfish ends; Presbyterian ministers were deprived of their stipends; and every kind of persecution was practised. It was in this way that Charles II. repaid the Scots for their loyal devotion at Dunbar and Worcester!

It was, of course, impossible for the people of Scotland tamely to endure such wrongs. In the year 1666, they rose against their persecutors. This is the

The year
1666.

year which the poet Dryden has celebrated in verse as the *Annus Mirabilis* (the wonderful year)—the year in which the English gained an important victory over the Dutch at sea, and when the city of London was almost entirely destroyed by the

Great Fire, which lasted for three days and three nights. The unfortunate Covenanters were completely defeated in the first battle which they attempted, and those who escaped were forced to skulk about the country in hiding, while those who were taken prisoners were cruelly tortured and put to death. Instruments of torture, which had not been in use since the time of the Reformation, were brought from the places in which they had been laid away, and once more were used to extort confessions from the wretched victims of persecution. During the remainder of Charles's reign, acts such as these, and even worse than these, continued to be done: the sufferings of the Covenanters at this time were almost as great as those of any persecuted people of whom we read in history. Many of the cruellest deeds of persecution were done at the command of John Graham of Claverhouse, whose name became in Scotland a household word for cruelty and brutality. He was for a while at the head of a force of dragoons sent by the king to put down the rebellion, and he tried to carry out his orders by means of the utmost sternness and even barbarity. The Covenanters defeated him in 1679 at the battle of Drumclog, but they had afterwards to pay dearly for their victory.

Persecution
in Scotland.

Drumclog,
1679.

The death of Charles II. in 1685 did not put an end to the persecution of the Presbyterians. James II. of England and VII. of Scotland was a Roman Catholic, and there can be no doubt that he was anxious to restore the Roman Catholic worship in Great Britain. Of the four Stuart kings who ruled in England, he was perhaps both the least attractive and the least able. Cold, gloomy, and morose,

Reign of
James II.

he had all the Stuart domineering spirit without the intellect of James I., the amiable private character of Charles I., or the tact and pleasing manners of his brother Charles II. It is said that Charles II. once remarked to the Prince of Orange that, if James ever came to the throne, he would not be able to hold it for four years. This prophecy was literally fulfilled: in December 1688, before the fourth year of his reign was completed, James was fleeing from the country of which he had been king to France. His constant attempts to set aside the laws of the country with regard to religious questions, and to appoint Roman Catholics to offices of trust, had thoroughly alarmed the Protestants. Early in the first year of his reign, an insurrection was attempted, both in Scotland and in England, by English and Scottish exiles who had fled abroad to escape from persecution. In England, the leader was the Duke of Monmouth; in Scotland, the Earl of Argyle, son of the Argyle who had been executed in the reign of Charles II. Neither of these risings, however, was successful. The Duke of Monmouth was totally defeated at Sedgemoor in Devonshire—the last battle fought on English soil; while in Scotland, the unfortunate Argyle was seized and executed, as his father had been before him.

**Battle of
Sedgemoor,
1685.**

It is during the short reign of James II. that we first find Newton taking any part in public affairs. Absorbed in his studies—in the solution of those problems which concern all time—he seems to have paid but little heed to the affairs of the passing hour. It was only when his university was concerned, and through it, to some extent, the future of learning, that he was induced to come forward. There had existed in England

since 1673 an act known as the Test Act, by which Roman Catholics were prevented from holding any public office in the country. This act applied also to the universities: no one could hold any appointment in the universities, or even receive an ordinary university degree, who was not willing to swear to the doctrines of the Established Church. James had set aside this act by making Roman Catholics officers in the army, and he now attempted to set it aside in the case of the universities as well. In 1687, he sent an order to the university of Cambridge to give the degree of Master of Arts to a certain Roman Catholic monk. The university refused to grant the degree unless the monk should consent to take the usual oath. James was indignant, and deputies from the university were summoned to appear before the Court of High Commission. Newton was one of them. Before going before the court, the deputies held a meeting to prepare their defence, and a paper was read in which it was proposed to give the degree to the king's candidate on condition that it should be understood that this was an exceptional case. This proposal was about to pass the meeting, when Newton, who, just risen from writing his *Principia*, had perhaps not been listening attentively to what was going on, woke up, and after taking two or three turns round the room, said to one of the officials present, "This is giving up the question." "So it is," was the answer. "Why did you not speak before?" Newton then gave his opinion to the meeting, with the result that in the end it was resolved to make no concessions, but to insist upon the rights of the university. So the deputies—among them the discoverer of the law of gravitation—

The Test
Act.

The
universities.

Meeting of
deputies.

Newton be-
fore Judge
Jeffreys.

appeared before the infamous Judge Jeffreys, by whom they were insolently reprimanded, while the vice-chancellor of Cambridge was deprived of his office.

Newton returned from the court to his *Principia*, which was published six weeks later, in June 1687.

Not since the time of Copernicus, about one hundred and fifty years before, had such important scientific discoveries been given to the public. Yet Newton had been preceded during the last century by several very able men of science. The most important of these were Kepler and Galileo, who, starting from the discovery of Copernicus, had each helped to carry on the science of astronomy. Copernicus, it will be remembered, had startled the world by announcing that the earth beneath our feet, which of all things appears to us most fixed and stationary, is really

moving round the sun at an enormously rapid rate. Kepler, who died in 1630, devoted himself chiefly to the discovery of the law which regulates the motion of the planets round the sun; and the result which he reached was afterwards of the greatest use in helping Newton to his great discovery. He found that the force (whatever it was) by which the planets were kept in their orbits varied inversely as the *squares of their distances* from the sun; and this, as Newton showed, was the law of the force of gravity.

Galileo, the great Italian astronomer, who was born in the same year as Shakespeare, 1564, and who died in that of Newton's birth, 1642, also prepared

the way for Newton by the discovery of the general laws of motion. The story of his life is interesting as showing the ignorance and superstition of the Roman Catholic clergy. Because he had maintained the doctrine of Copernicus—that the earth moves round

the sun—he was summoned before the Inquisition, and after being put to the torture, was forced to renounce this doctrine. Kneeling on the ground before his judges, clad in sackcloth, the old man (he was then about seventy) solemnly renounced the theory of the earth's motion, and took an oath never to teach it. There is a story told that, as he left the judgment room, he muttered to himself, "And yet it does move" (*Eppur si muove*); but it is not certain that this is true.

We have seen that when first, in 1666, the idea of universal gravitation occurred to Newton, his attempts to prove it were disappointing. This arose from the fact that he had at that time made use of an incorrect measurement of the distance of the moon from the earth. When he afterwards employed the correct measurement, his calculations showed him that the force by which the moon was held in her path round the earth was less than the actual force of gravity at the earth's surface by sixty times sixty. Now the moon is sixty times farther from the centre of the earth than the surface of the earth is, so that, if Newton's hypothesis were correct, the force of gravity at the moon *ought to be* less than at the surface of the earth by the *square of sixty*, or sixty times sixty. Having thus proved the action of gravity on the moon, he next proceeded to prove it in the case of the planets, and was able to announce to the world the simple law by which the universe of planets and suns is ordered,—“Every particle of matter in the universe attracts every other with a force varying inversely as the square of the distance.”

Newton
proves the
law of
gravitation.

This law once established, Newton, as well as many scientific men since his time, was able to employ it for the discovery of many important scientific truths. By

means of it he explained the mystery of the tides, and calculated the quantity of matter in the sun and in all those planets which have satellites. All this, and much more of the greatest importance, was contained in his *Principia*. Perhaps no one work had ever before appeared which contained so much profound reasoning and such startling scientific discoveries.

Newton was not yet five and forty when his great work was published, and he had yet forty years of life before him. During these years he was not idle, though he did not produce a second *Principia*. For a while he suffered in his health, and it was said that his mind

Newton in
parliament,
1689.

had given way; but this has been disproved. In 1689, he sat in parliament as member for Cambridge; but save this empty honour, his country did nothing for long to prove her gratitude to the man who had done the most important work that had been done for centuries. His friends exerted themselves to secure for him some easy post with a good salary, but it was not till 1695 that they were successful. In that year he was appointed Warden of the Mint, an office which he fulfilled with the faithfulness and integrity which he showed in every action of his life.

In his later years he devoted himself to theology as well as to mathematics and science, and there exist some theological writings of his which are full of an earnest religious spirit. In his daily life he showed

His private
character.

himself to be a sincere Christian, humble and simple-minded, and generous to a fault. He was never married; and he employed his means in helping his poor relations as well as struggling scholars, and also in giving liberally to charities. In society his manner was modest and natural, without any airs or

eccentricities. Like Socrates of old, he seems to have felt that he only knew enough to know that he knew nothing. As he said so beautifully himself, it seemed to him as if he were merely a boy playing on the sea-shore, and pleased when he happened to find a smother pebble or a prettier shell than usual, "while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him." During the years at Cambridge before the publication of the *Principia*, he lived a life of the most unsparing labour. We are told that he seldom slept more than five or six hours, and hardly ever went out even for a walk, all his day being spent in his laboratory or at his books. He often forgot both his dinner and his supper; and if reminded of an untouched meal, would come to the table and eat it *standing*! He was very absent-minded—so much so that, as the story goes, on one occasion when he was riding, having dismounted at the foot of a hill and put the bridle over his arm, he found, when intending to mount again at the top of the hill, that the horse had slipped the bridle and gone off without his ever knowing it!

The history of England and of Europe during the long life of Newton is full of many changes and many interesting events; but it is not our purpose to carry on the historical narrative here beyond the year 1687, when Newton's great work was given to the world. During his life, six different sovereigns sat upon the throne of England; but except in the instances mentioned, he seems to have interested himself little in public affairs. In 1705, he was knighted by Queen Anne on the occasion of a royal visit to Cambridge. In 1727, he died peacefully at the advanced age of eighty-four. To the end he had kept all his faculties; his sight was so good that he

His death,
1727.

never used spectacles ; and we are even told that he had not lost more than one tooth.

On the pedestal of the statue of him in Trinity College, Cambridge, are these words in Latin, "Newton, who surpassed the human race in intellect ;" but Bishop Burnet paid an even more noble tribute to the memory of the great discoverer of gravitation when he said of him that he had "the *whitest* soul of any man he ever knew."



CHAPTER VIII.

WILLIAM III.—THE BALANCE OF POWER—SETTLEMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

DURING the latter half of the seventeenth century, as we have seen, by far the greatest power of Europe was France; and in France the king was supreme. We have seen how Cardinal Richelieu had laboured during the reign of Louis XIII. to bring about this result, and how his successor, Mazarin, had carried on the work so ably begun. The labours of these two statesmen had fully realized their highest hopes. When, on the death of Mazarin in 1661, Louis XIV., who was not yet three and twenty years old, took the government of France into his own hands, he at once became by far the most powerful monarch in Europe.

Supremacy
of France.

He was a man of strong intellect, strong will, and enormous ambition. Like the Stuart kings of England, he believed in the doctrine of the divine right of sovereigns; he held that a king was the representative in his own country of God himself, and that his subjects ought to obey him without question as they would obey the commands of the Almighty. "The state—I am the state" (*L'état—c'est moi*), an often quoted saying of his, shows his opinion of the absolute power of the kingly office. In England

Character of
Louis XIV.

one king had been brought to the scaffold for acting upon such a view of his authority as this; and later another was forced to fly from the country and his throne for a similar reason. But the people of Great Britain were far in advance of the mass of the subjects of Louis XIV. in their political education; they had reached the idea of the rights of the people—an idea which was not reached in France till a century later, when it found expression in the wild fury and blood-drunkness of the great Revolution.

In the seventeenth century it was still safe for a king of France to keep up his court and retinue in a style of the most magnificent extravagance, to equip and maintain a powerful fleet and army, and to lavish vast bribes on neighbouring monarchs and courtiers with money gained by the sufferings and hardships of his poorer subjects. In France the taxes fell most heavily on the poorest people, and in many districts the labouring population were almost reduced to starvation in order to pay them. We who read of these things now are horror-struck to think of the innocent, hard-working peasants of France being deprived almost of their daily bread that Charles II. of England might have money to throw away on his idle pleasures and worthless favourites, and that Louis might have the means to carry on his ambitious schemes, which were to benefit no one. One cannot help wondering that the people of France should so long have endured such wrongs in silence.

The ambition of Louis XIV. was not only the cause of hardship and suffering to his poorer subjects, it was also a source of danger to the other nations of Europe. Men had not yet forgotten how, during the sixteenth century, the enormous

The taxes
in France.

The balance
of power.

power of Spain had endangered the peace and liberty of all the other countries of Europe; and now France seemed about to occupy the position which Spain had then held. Gradually there had been growing in the minds of European statesmen the idea of the "balance of power"—the idea that no one country in Europe ought to be allowed to become so powerful as to endanger the peace and safety of the others. It was this idea that led to the formation, in 1668, of the Triple Alliance of England, Holland, and Sweden against France; but, as we have seen, that alliance was broken up by the secret treaty of Charles II. with Louis XIV., known as the Treaty of Dover. The man who was to make his own, and to realize in action, the idea of the balance of power was William Henry, Prince of Orange.

Born in 1650, this prince was a mere lad when, on the death of Philip IV. of Spain, Louis laid claim to the Spanish Netherlands in right of his wife, the eldest daughter of the late king, and led an army into the Low Countries to maintain his claim. It was to repel this invasion that the Triple Alliance was formed, and for a while Louis was forced to keep at rest. But in 1672, having formed his secret treaty with the King of England, he declared war with the United Provinces, and crossed the Rhine with a great army, one division of which was commanded by the celebrated general, Turenne.

**Louis XIV.
invades
the United
Provinces,
1672.**

Since the Treaty of Westphalia, which put an end to the Thirty Years' War in 1648, the independence of the United Provinces had been formally and universally acknowledged. We have already seen something of the beginning of the long, brave struggle by which that independence was at length secured—how William the

**The
struggle
in the
United
Provinces.**

Silent, almost alone, defied the vast power of Spain, and, in order to gain the freedom of his countrymen, freely sacrificed his wealth, his ease, his safety, and even his life. On his death, the struggle was bravely carried on for many years by his son Maurice, and afterwards by a younger son, Frederick Henry. During these years the republic had steadily risen in strength and importance; its agriculture and commerce were flourishing, its chief city was the commercial capital of the world, and its fleet was rivalled only by that of England.

During the lifetime of the father of our present “torch-bearer,” however, William II. of Orange, the country was much troubled by civil strife. A party had risen up which was opposed to the family of Orange, and wished to abolish the office of Stadtholder or Governor of the Provinces, which had become hereditary in that family. The leader of this party was John De Witt, a man of great ability and of excellent character, who held the office of Grand Pensionary of the Province of Holland. When, in 1650, William II. died, eight days before the birth of his son, De Witt was practically at the head of the government of the Provinces. At the close of the naval war between the Dutch and the English, 1652–54, he entered into a secret treaty with Cromwell, by which it was resolved that the Orange family should be excluded from holding any high office of state in the Provinces; and later he succeeded in passing the Perpetual Edict, by which the office of stadtholder was abolished for ever. He seems to have felt the same intense hatred and suspicion of this office that Brutus of old felt for that of king at Rome. After the restoration of Charles II. to the throne of England, De Witt was more disposed to favour an alliance with

France than with England; and it was that which brought about his fall.

As the great army of Louis XIV. marched upon the Provinces, and town after town was forced to open its gates to it, the old spirit of the brave people who had defied the power of Spain blazed up in all its strength and fury. They remembered how, just exactly a century before, in 1572, a prince of the house of Orange had stood by them in their darkest hour, and how he had saved for them their independence and religious freedom at the price of his own life; and they resolved, now that their national existence was threatened a second time by a powerful foe, to place themselves under the guidance of the great-grandson of the man who had been their deliverer a hundred years before.

One crime stains the heroism of the Dutch at this time: De Witt and his brother Cornelius, falsely accused of favouring the enemy, were seized by an infuriated mob at the Hague, and brutally murdered. The prince has been blamed for making no attempt to punish the murderers; but perhaps, at such a time and in such circumstances, it would have been almost impossible to fix the guilt of the crime on the true authors.

William was barely two and twenty, but he was appointed stadtholder, and the command of the forces of the United Provinces was given to him. He showed at once that he was worthy of the trust placed in him. With all the fiery courage of youth, he possessed a calm judgment and prudence and an inflexible resolution most unusual in a man of his years.

Turenne, the illustrious general of the French king, was the great-uncle of the young prince, his mother

Murder of
De Witt,
Aug. 27,
1672.

William
appointed
stadtholder.

His
character.

having been a daughter of William the Silent; and it is said that both the general and his sovereign attempted to gain him over by means of splendid offers. But William, like his great ancestor, whom he resembled closely in character as well as in the events of this period of his life, was not to be bribed. He showed himself to be guided by strong religious principle and a deep love of country. When it seemed as if the Provinces must be overpowered by the splendid army of France and the united fleets of France and England, he made a remark which has become almost a proverb—one means by which he could be certain never to see the ruin of his country, he said, was to “die in the last ditch.”

It was the young prince who, as the French army advanced, ordered the dikes to be pierced and the country to be flooded; it was the prince who reminded the Assembly of the Estates that, if the worst came to the worst, the Dutch had still their fleet, on board of which those who loved their freedom more than ease or comfort might sail away to found a new republic in a new continent—a scheme which, in the darkest hour of Holland a hundred years before, William the Silent had suggested.

Meantime the French army was forced to retreat before the advancing ocean; a storm drove the combined fleets of England and France from the Dutch coasts, and help was coming to the United Provinces from their old enemy, Spain, against the common enemy,

France. For six years the war lasted; and when, in 1678, it was brought to an end by the Peace of Nimwegen, 1678. the Peace of Nimwegen, William was able to gain honourable terms for Holland, which at one time it had seemed as if the inhabitants would be forced to

quit, in order to save their lives and liberties. During these six years the Prince of Orange had earned the respect and admiration of Europe. He had shown that he possessed a cool courage, an iron will, and firm principles, along with considerable skill as a general. But in spite of all he had done for his country, he was looked on with suspicion by many of the nobles and leading men of the Provinces, who belonged to the party opposed to the Orange family. And from the old enemies of his family, the Spaniards, too, though a common danger had for a while made them his allies, he met with much envy and ill-feeling.

Long before the conclusion of the war with France, England had made peace with Holland, and for some time there had been talk of a marriage between the Prince of Orange and the Princess Mary of England. Mary was the eldest daughter of James, Duke of York (afterwards James II.), and heir to the throne of England after her father, Charles II. having no legitimate children. She was only about fifteen years of age when, in 1677, before the peace of Nimwegen had been concluded, William came over to England to see her, and the marriage was afterwards celebrated. It was very popular in England, for William was known to be a stanch Protestant, and he was also by birth a prince of the royal blood of England, his mother having been the daughter of Charles I., and sister of the reigning king. He was thus his wife's full cousin, and after herself and her sister Anne, next heir to the English throne.

**Marriage
of William
with Mary
of England.**

Though William had thus saved his country from utter ruin, and obtained for her honourable terms at the close of a long war, he had been unable to prevent France from obtaining some advantages by the Peace of

Nimwegen. After this peace France was emphatically the greatest power in Europe, and her ambitious monarch was resolved to add to his dominions Spain and Germany. It seemed as if there were no one in Europe fit to oppose these ambitious schemes of the French king. Germany, exhausted by the Thirty Years' War, was quite unable to meet the splendid army of France; Spain was rapidly falling into decay, and her king was a sickly boy; and England was governed by a monarch who was actually in the pay of the King of France, as were also several of his chief ministers. The only man in Europe who at this time showed himself brave enough and disinterested enough to take up a position hostile to the great Louis

Ambition of Louis XIV.

Policy of William III.

XIV. was the prince of a small, half-submerged country, divided within itself with civil strife. Far above the reach of bribery, and full of an unwavering patriotism, William of Orange saw with the clear, far-seeing eye of an able statesman that it was for the advantage, not only of Holland, but also of all the other countries of Europe, that the balance of power should be preserved—that the ambitious progress of France should be checked; and he made it the business of his life to keep a calm, steady watch on all the movements of the French king, and to thwart his favourite schemes by clever statesmanship, and the formation of alliances of the other powers against France. If, at the close of the seventeenth century, the independence of the other countries of Europe and the Protestant faith were not completely trampled under the feet of the King of France, it was owing chiefly to the resolution, the watchfulness, and the skilful management of William III.

Thoughtful people in England, disgusted with the

part of a mere puppet which their king had played to Louis, could not but contrast his conduct with that of William of Orange, altogether to the advantage of the latter; and later, when James II., during his short reign, had estranged his subjects by his unamiable and unprincipled character, and alarmed them by his attachment to the Roman Catholic Church and by his disregard of the laws of the country, there were many who looked forward with eagerness to the succession of William to the throne of England. But, in 1688, his legal claim to the succession through his wife was put an end to by the birth of a son to James II. Mary was no longer the heir to the English throne.

At the time of the birth of his son, James had reached the height of his unpopularity with his Protestant subjects. He had published for the second time a *Declaration of Indulgence*—a bill very unpopular with the nation—the object of which was to throw open to Roman Catholics all the offices then closed to them by law. This bill he ordered to be read in every church; and when the Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops ventured to present a petition against the reading of the bill, as being against their consciences, he ordered them to be sent to the Tower, and had them tried on a charge of publishing a seditious libel. The birth of his son naturally increased the indignation which James had aroused by such actions as these. The mother of the little prince, James's second wife, was a Roman Catholic like her husband, and there was every reason to expect that the child would be brought up to follow in his father's footsteps. The prospect of a second reign such as that of James was not to be faced.

Feeling of
the English
people.

Declaration
of Indul-
gence.

A week or two after the birth of the prince, William of Orange was formally invited to come to England in a letter signed by seven of the most important men in the country. In October of the same year, 1688, he issued a proclamation, in which he declared his intention of coming to England to secure for the people the safety of their religion and their laws, which were endangered by the conduct of the king. He stated that he had no intention of attempting a conquest, but that he meant to summon a free parliament to inquire into the grievances of the people. Early in November he landed at Torbay in Devonshire with a large army. The king, with even larger forces, advanced to meet him; but one by one his chief officers dropped off from him and joined William. Finding himself almost deserted, James was obliged to retreat to London. There he found that his daughter Anne, too, had gone over to the opposite party, and crushed by the discovery, he exclaimed, "God alone can help me, when even my own children forsake me!" Anne's husband, Prince George of Denmark, had already deserted the camp of his father-in-law for that of William. But the desertion which the unhappy king seems to have felt most deeply was that of John Churchill, afterwards the celebrated Duke of Marlborough. Churchill had been a page in James's household, and owed his rise in life chiefly to



**James is
deserted.**

the influence of James, who seems to have had an affection for him.

By the end of December, William had made his entry into London amid the rejoicings of the people, without a blow having been struck, and James had escaped to France. The proposal to place the king in confinement had several times been made to William, but he decidedly refused to listen to it. In January 1689, the celebrated "Convention" Parliament met—so called because it was not summoned by the recognized authority, that of the sovereign. In this parliament it was decided that King James, by acting in defiance of the laws of the country, and by withdrawing from the kingdom, had forfeited the crown; and also that it was unsafe for Protestant England to be governed by a Popish king. For these reasons it was resolved to offer the crown to the Princess Mary, eldest daughter of James, who had been brought up a Protestant, conjointly with her husband, William, Prince of Orange.

Early in February, William and Mary were solemnly offered the crown of England; and some time later they were proclaimed at Edinburgh King and Queen of Scotland also (April 11). But neither the English nor the Scottish parliament thought fit to place the government unconditionally in the hands of the new sovereigns. The people of Great Britain had at length learned the lesson which the last half century of their history was to teach them—that the liberty and religion of the people must be secured, and that the laws of the nation must be placed beyond the power of any one man, even though he were the king, to overthrow or alter them. The period of confusion that had followed the death of Cromwell had

The Convention Parliament, 1689.

Crown offered to William and Mary.

shown men that it was necessary that the chief rulers of the country should succeed each other in an order fixed by law; while the reigns of Charles II. and his brother James, and the disregard which the latter in particular had shown for the laws and the religion of the nation, had made it evident that, in order to secure the safety of the laws, the power of the chief ruler must be *limited*, the monarch being required to govern in ac-

The
Declaration
of Right,
1689.

cordance with the laws. These considerations led to the drawing up of the Declaration of Right, the document on which the constitution of Great Britain is founded. Since it was agreed that Roman Catholics should be excluded from the throne, Mary was the lawful sovereign. But even a Protestant sovereign was no longer to be allowed unlimited power in the country, and the Declaration of Right laid down the limits of the royal power. It was a statement of the demands which the people made of the sovereign in return for their oath of allegiance. The sovereign, it was laid down, must not make or dispense with laws without consent of parliament; he must not levy money, or maintain a standing army, without consent of parliament; parliaments must be frequently held, and must have freedom of debate, and the members must be freely elected.

Before the crown was offered to the new sovereigns, this document was read to them, and both William and Mary solemnly promised to rule in accordance with it—a promise which was faithfully kept by them, and which has been observed also by all their successors to the present time. Thus, without the spilling of blood,

England
a limited
monarchy.

the English Revolution was accomplished, and the constitution of the nation was settled as a *limited monarchy*—that is, a monarchy with

the powers of the monarch strictly defined. With this constitution Britain has risen to be the greatest power in the world.

In spite of all that James II. had done to estrange the affections of his subjects, there were still many, especially the Roman Catholics in the north of Scotland and in Ireland, who clung to him as their lawful king; and in both these countries there were Stuart risings. In Scotland the rebellion was headed by that Claverhouse, now Viscount Dundee, who had so brutally persecuted the Covenanters during the preceding reigns. With an army of some 2,000 Highlanders, he completely defeated the forces of William under General Mackay in the celebrated Pass of Killiecrankie in Perthshire; but in the very moment of victory he was himself slain, and his army, having no longer a leader, broke up and dispersed.

**Rising in
Scotland.**

**Battle
of Killie-
crankie.**

In Ireland the rebellion was much more serious, as much the greater number of the people were Roman Catholics, and therefore favourable to James. James himself, with large supplies of arms and ammunition and money provided by Louis XIV., who was eager to injure his enemy William, landed in Ireland in March 1689. Only in the north of Ireland, where Protestant colonists were settled, was there any opposition offered to him. The heroic way in which the little town of Londonderry withstood a siege of more than three months, refusing to surrender even after the inhabitants were reduced to starvation, is the proudest boast of Protestant Ireland. The man who distinguished himself most in this siege was a Protestant clergyman, George Walker. When the governor of the

**Rebellion in
Ireland.**

**Siege of Lon-
donderry,
1689.**

town was suspected of betraying it into the hands of the enemy, it was Walker who, along with a Major Baker, took the leading part in carrying on the defence, encouraging the people both by his words and by his example—now mounting his horse to ride round the town and inspect the defences, now ascending the pulpit to remind the besieged in eloquent words that they were fighting in the cause of their religion. When at length English vessels, sent by William for the relief of the town, made their way into the harbour, the garrison was reduced to half-a-pound of tallow and three-quarters of a pound of salted hide for the daily rations of each man.

It was not till the following year that William was able to leave England in order to carry on the war in Ireland in person. He landed at Carrickfergus; and after assembling his forces,

he marched southward on Dundalk. James, hearing of the approach of the enemy, retreated to the river Boyne, and took up a strong position on the right bank of the river. When, after several days' march, William came in sight of the enemy, posted on the opposite side of the river, he showed great satisfaction, and at once made

his arrangements for the battle, which was fought the following day.

His army, which was composed of Irish Protestants,

William in
Ireland.



Battle of
the Boyne,
1690.

English, Scots, French Huguenots, Dutch, and even some Danes, waded across the river in the face of the enemy's fire, and succeeded not only in making good their footing, but also in defeating the army of James. It was a great victory for William. Throughout the day he had shown the greatest coolness and courage, and though he was physically an extremely weakly man, he had endured the fatigue of being for many hours in his saddle.

The battle of the Boyne, however, did not put an end to the disturbances in Ireland. After an unsuccessful siege of Limerick, which was bravely held for James by Patrick Sarsfield, the ablest and most popular general in Ireland, William was forced to return to England, leaving the command in Ireland to one of his Dutch generals, Ginkell. This general brought the war to a conclusion in the following year by the Treaty of Limerick, by which the Jacobites, as the followers of James were called, agreed to lay down arms on condition that the Roman Catholics in Ireland should be free to worship in their own way, and that all the soldiers who chose to go to France should be transported there. Ten thousand Irishmen joined the service of Louis XIV., and formed his celebrated Irish Brigade. Ireland was thus pacified, and ceased to give any further trouble to William.

**Treaty of
Limerick,
1691.**

In Scotland, too, the rebellion was for the time put an end to; but it was there that there occurred, in the year after the Treaty of Limerick, a horrible massacre which has cast a stain on the memory of William. The Secretary for Scotland, Sir John Dalrymple, had appointed the 31st December 1691 as the last day on which the oath of allegiance to William could be taken; all persons who had not taken the oath by that time were to be treated as public enemies.

**Massacre of
Glencoe,
1692.**

William ought certainly to be pardoned, for never had a sovereign a harder position to fill than he had at this time. A stranger in a strange land, and occupying a throne to which he was not the legal heir, he was looked upon with suspicion and distrust even by those who had helped to raise him to his present position; while his extreme reserve of manner, inherited from his ancestor, William the Silent, earned for him the character of coldness and heartlessness, and prevented him from winning the affections of his subjects. He seems to have been keenly aware of this himself, and remarked bitterly on one occasion that he was less trusted by the people whose religion and liberty he had secured, than the Stuart kings, by whom these had been trampled upon.

Position of
William.

In Holland, too, which was still divided by the Republican and Orange parties, his position was by no means easy. But in spite of the difficulties of his position, he continued to carry out, in his silent, dogged way, the policy which he believed would secure the prosperity, not only of Great Britain and Holland, but also of all Europe. Even his elevation to the throne of Great Britain, and the difficulties with which he had to contend in his new kingdom, could not make him lose sight of the object to which he had before devoted himself—the establishment of the balance of power in Europe. He continued to keep a steady watch on all the movements of Louis XIV., and to oppose him wherever it was possible to do so. In 1689, he formed the *Grand Alliance*, which was joined by Germany, Holland, England, Spain, and Sweden, the object being to check the ambition of Louis XIV., and to force him to keep within the boundaries agreed on in the Peace of Westphalia. This alliance,

The Grand
Alliance,
1689.

often in danger of breaking up in consequence of jealousies arising between the different states, was kept together only by the ceaseless care and skilful management of William. During the summer of 1691, and the six following summers, he himself crossed over to the Continent and conducted the campaign against France in the Low Countries ; and though often defeated, he showed, even in defeat, his skill in generalship, so that it was said of him that he managed a retreat so cleverly that it was almost as good as a victory.

It was while William was engaged in the campaign in the Netherlands in 1692, that Louis planned a great invasion of England in support of James II. **Attempted invasion of England, 1692.** Some thirty thousand men, amongst whom was the celebrated Irish Brigade, were assembled on the coast of France opposite England, and a fleet was ready to convey them across the Channel. James himself issued a rather foolish proclamation, calling on his subjects to join his standard, and assuring them that there was no need to fear William, as French forces would be sent over to protect them against him. Mary, who, in the absence of her husband, administered affairs with the help of a council of nine, at once had this proclamation published and circulated throughout the country. As she had doubts of the loyalty of Admiral Russell, who commanded the fleet, she sent him a copy of the proclamation, along with a letter from herself expressing her confidence in the fleet, and she ordered him to read the latter to his officers. The effect of these wise measures was to strengthen the fidelity of those who were favourable to the reigning sovereigns, and to make those who had been disposed to take part in the Jacobite conspiracy feel ashamed of themselves. **Victory of La Hogue.** When the French fleet put to

sea, the English fleet met and defeated it off the coast of France opposite La Hogue.

This victory was gained chiefly through the tact of the queen, who possessed a very amiable and prudent character. From the moment of her coming to England she had gained the affections of the people by her gentle manners and her sweetness of disposition, and the generosity and charity which she afterwards showed endeared her to them still more. Her death, which took place in December 1694, was sincerely mourned by the whole nation.

Mary's
death,
1694.

During her illness she showed the greatest sweetness and patience. She never uttered a complaint, gave her last directions to those around her with the utmost calmness, and even tried to console her husband, who was quite overwhelmed with sorrow at the thought of losing her. Those whom William's silent manner had taught to think him cold and heartless were quite amazed at the intensity of his grief. They forgot that the most silent natures are generally the deepest.

The death of the queen was not only a great personal grief to William, but it also helped to make his position in England more uncomfortable. His claim to the throne, such as it was, came through his wife; and now that she was gone, the people were apt to murmur that he was only an interloper and a foreigner, and to forget what he had done for the country. Plots were formed against his life, in some of which Louis XIV., eager to get rid of his greatest foe, himself took part. Even before the death of Mary, the great general, Marlborough, afterwards the hero of Blenheim, had been concerned in a plot to drive William out of the country and place the Princess Anne, the sister of Mary, on the throne; but William had discovered it

Plots
against
William.

in time, and had stripped Marlborough of all his offices. In 1695, however, a more serious conspiracy was formed, one part of which was to assassinate William while he was hunting. The disclosure of this plot aroused the indignation of the greater part of the nation, and led to the formation of an association to protect the life of the king.

It was in the year of this plot, 1695, that William's campaign in the Low Countries was most successful, he having captured the important fortress of Namur. Two years later Louis was forced to make peace with the allies. The last five years during which the war was going on had been years of great scarcity and barrenness, and in France the distress was so great that it was impossible for the king to raise funds for carrying on the war by his usual means of grinding down his poorer subjects. He was beginning to suffer from the consequences of the greatest blunder of his reign—the persecution of the Huguenots. We have seen how Henry IV. of France had secured the safety of the Huguenots by passing the famous Edict of Nantes in 1598. Under the shelter of this edict, and of the wise toleration of Cardinal Richelieu, the Huguenots had risen up to be the most prosperous and wealthy portion of the French people, the greater part of the commerce and manufactures of the country being carried on by them. Louis, however, from the beginning of his reign, had carried on a system of cruel persecution against them, and by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 he drove them in thousands from the country. Just as happened in the time of the Spanish persecutions of the Netherland Protestants more than a century before, these innocent people, driven from their homes,

The war
on the
Continent.

Revocation
of Edict
of Nantes,
1685.

fled to Protestant countries, into which they introduced their commerce and manufactures. The silk factories of Spitalfields near London were founded at this time by Huguenot refugees, to whom also Berlin is largely indebted for the rise of her commercial importance.

The loss of the most industrious portion of the nation no doubt helped to cause the distress in France which forced Louis to make peace. In 1697, the celebrated Peace of Ryswick was signed, by which, among other things, Louis XIV. agreed to acknowledge William as King of Great Britain and Ireland, and promised to give no support to James.

**The Peace
of Ryswick,
1697.**

Though William had thus made good his position in the face of the opposition of the greatest monarch of the day, he had still much to trouble him. In many ways his parliaments showed their want of complete confidence in him; and his parliament of 1698 in particular pained him by voting that his faithful Dutch troops, who had served under him in Ireland and in several campaigns on the Continent, should be sent out of the country. This parliament also revoked the grants of land in Ireland which William had made to some of his Dutch friends. If the king, who had just secured the peace of Europe and the independence of Great Britain, as well as the religion and liberty of his subjects, felt aggrieved at such treatment as this, we can hardly wonder.

**Troubles
with
parliament.**

While his great enemy was thus hampered by his parliaments, Louis fancied he was not to be feared, and was soon making preparations for a new war. In 1700, the King of Spain died, leaving no family. His will named as his successor on the Spanish throne Philip of Anjou, grandson of the French king. In spite of a treaty which he had made

**The
Partition
Treaty.**

with William (the Partition Treaty), by which it was agreed that the Spanish dominions should be divided among the heirs of the king, Louis resolved to make good his grandson's claim by force of arms. The Emperor of Germany also took up arms in support of his son, the Archduke Charles, who was the other heir to the Spanish crown. Thus began the *War of the Spanish Succession*, which lasted for many years, and gave to the Duke of Marlborough an opportunity for the display of his brilliant talents as a general.

William III. saw clearly that to allow Louis to add to his kingdom the dominions of Spain was completely to undo the work of his life, to upset the balance of power, and to place all Europe entirely at the mercy of France; but hampered as he was by his parliaments, he was at first unable to do anything. However, when, in 1701, James II. died in France, and Louis was known to have acknowledged his son, James Francis Edward, as King of Great Britain and Ireland, in spite of the Treaty of Ryswick, the indignation of the people of England was great, and the parliament warmly supported the king's desire for war with France. Troops were being levied and preparations made for the war, when, in February 1702, William was thrown from his horse while hunting. At first it seemed as if his injuries were not serious, but his weakly frame could not recover from the shock. A few days afterwards he fevered, and only a fortnight after the accident Louis of France had got rid of his most powerful enemy.

There have been many greater generals and even greater men than William III., but no one ever took up and held a more important and more difficult position

in history than he; no one ever with a clearer eye saw what he had to do, or with a sounder judgment did it. We cannot but admire the resolution and prudence with which, in spite of the loneliness of his position, the distrust of his subjects, and the enmity of the greatest power in Europe, he carried out the object of his life.



WILLIAM THE THIRD.

CHAPTER IX.

PETER THE GREAT—THE RISE OF RUSSIA.

IN the year in which William of Orange first distinguished himself by driving back from his native land the magnificent army of France, there was born in Russia a child who was destined to raise that country, which as yet had hardly taken a part in European affairs, to the position of one of the chief powers of Europe.

In order to be able to understand what Peter the Great did for his country, we must know something of the condition in which he found it. It is perhaps not too much to say that Russia was at that time centuries behind the rest of Europe in civilization. Unlike the countries of Western Europe—France, Italy, Spain, and even Britain—Russia was scarcely brought in contact with the civilization of the great Roman empire. The name Russia was unknown in classical times, the country to which we now give that name being vaguely called Scythia. Of the history of the country almost nothing is known before the ninth century of the Christian era, when we are told that it was inhabited by a race of people known as Slavs or Slavonians, to which the greater number of the present inhabitants of Russia belong. It was during the ninth century, too, that the

State of
Russia
before
Peter the
Great.

country was invaded by that restless race of sea-robbers who, about this time, harassed the coasts of almost every country of Europe—the Norsemen of Scandinavia. The invaders, who were headed by three Viking brothers, Rurik, Sineus, and Truvor, settled about Novgorod, which afterwards became a city of great importance. In the tenth century, Vladimir, the great-grandson of Rurik, the Norse invader, adopted the Christian religion, and forced his subjects also to adopt it.

The history of the next two centuries is the record of the quarrels and fights of the barbarous chiefs who ruled over the petty principalities into which the country was divided. Early in the thirteenth century, an event occurred which no doubt helped largely to keep back the progress of the Russians in civilization. This was the conquest of the country by the Mongols, or Tatars, a barbarous race from the centre of Asia, who, under their celebrated leader Chingis or Gengis Khan, had about this time risen to great power. For two hundred and fifty years all Russia was under the rule of these barbarians, and the Russian princes were forced to do homage to their khan or chief, and to accompany him on his military expeditions whenever he required them to do so. Though they ruled over the country for two centuries, however, the Mongols do not seem very much to have affected either the language or the customs of the Russians. Still the Russians adopted from them a more eastern style of dress, and many Mongol words, especially for articles of dress, are found in the Russian language.

Towards the end of the long period of Mongol rule, the little principality of which Moscow was the capital had risen to considerable power. Before this time, the

Adoption of
Christianity,
tenth
century.

Mongol
conquest,
1238.

chief cities of Russia were Novgorod and Kiev; but Moscow was to be for centuries the capital. **Rise of Moscow, fourteenth century.** As early as the middle of the fourteenth century, a Grand-Duke of Moscow, Ivan II., ventured to call himself the Prince of all the Russias. The son of this Ivan defeated the Mongols in a great battle in 1380; and a century later, so powerful had the principality become that the prince of the time, Ivan III., felt himself strong enough to refuse allegiance to the Mongol khan. **Ivan III., 1462-1505.** Ivan III., who reigned for forty-three years, was a very able and ambitious man, and did a great deal to strengthen and improve his country. He was the first Russian prince who took the title of Tsar or Czar, which seems to be derived from the Latin Cæsar. It will be remembered that the last of the Cæsars or Emperors of the East had fallen only a few years before, in 1453, at the celebrated siege of Constantinople by the Turks. The niece of this emperor, Zoe, afterwards Sophia, became the wife of Ivan III., and brought with her into Russia many learned Greeks, who had been driven from their native country by the Turkish conquest. These men laboured to improve the state of learning in Russia.

During the next century, the principality of Moscow, or Muscovy, as it was called, continued to **Russia in sixteenth century.** make progress in extent and in civilization; but it was still far behind the rest of Europe, from which it was entirely cut off by its hostile neighbours. On the west lay the kingdom of Poland and the powerful principality of Lithuania, with both of which Russia was almost constantly at war; and on the south was the hostile country of the Turks. A nation, like an individual, cannot make much progress if it is entirely shut into itself. The clearness with which he

saw this, the wisdom with which he resolved to connect Russia with Western Europe, and the energy and strength of will with which he carried out his resolve, make Peter I. one of the greatest monarchs that ever reigned. Long before his time, his predecessor, Ivan IV., the grandson of Ivan III., had felt the need of an outlet by which Western Europe could be reached; but he did not succeed in gaining one. It was during the reign of this tsar, however, that a communication was opened up between Russia and England. In 1553, an English vessel entered the White Sea, on the north of Russia. It was one of three which had set out on an expedition to discover a north-east passage to China and India, the crews of the other two having perished with cold. Ivan welcomed the leader of the expedition, Richard Chancellor, and gave him and his companions permission to come and go and to buy and sell in his dominions. This was the beginning of the important trade between Russia and England. Elizabeth afterwards formed a commercial alliance with Ivan, and an English ambassador resided at his court.

But for a long period after the death of Ivan IV. the progress of Russia in civilization was put back by the struggles between the various claimants of the throne. It was during this "period of troubles," as it has been called, that the Russians came in contact with the great Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, who, it will be remembered, was able to boast, after his struggle with them, that they could not launch a single ship upon the Baltic without the permission of Sweden. But another monarch, no less great in some respects than Gustavus himself, was to change all that.

English
trade with
Russia.

Gustavus
Adolphus
and Russia.

Like Gustavus, Peter was only some seventeen years old when he took the government of his country into his own hands. On the death of his father, Alexis and Feodor. Alexis, whose long reign had done much to improve the state of Russia, he was a child of about four years, and two elder brothers stood between him and the throne. The elder, Feodor, who was weakly in body, died after a reign of about six years, having named Peter as his successor.

Peter was still but a child—only ten years old—and his half-brother Ivan, who was some years his senior, was still living. True, Ivan was weak in mind and quite unfit to rule ; but he had a sister, Sophia, The Princess Sophia. a woman of strong intellect and will, who was unwilling either that her brother should be passed over, or that she should lose an opportunity of governing the country herself under his name. By stirring up a revolt of the Streltsi, the chief military force of the country, she contrived to carry out her object ; Ivan and Peter were both crowned as tsars, while Sophia was appointed regent. For seven years she governed the country in the name of her brothers.

Meantime her young half-brother was already beginning to show that talent, energy, and strength of character which afterwards made him one of the greatest rulers of the time. His education had been extremely poor, as he afterwards complained ; but there were two arts in which, even as a child, he had shown the greatest interest and had received instructions—the art of ship-building and the art of war. His instructors were three foreigners who had come to Russia during the reign of his father, the Tsar Alexis—Timmermann, a Dutch ship-builder ; Patrick Gordon, a Scotsman, who be-

Character
and
education
of Peter.

came a Russian general; and Lefort, a native of Geneva.

It has already been mentioned how, during the peaceful reign of James I. of England, the adventurous younger sons of English, and more especially of Scottish families had made their way to the Continent in order to take part in the Thirty Years' War; and we have seen that the army of Gustavus Adolphus was largely made up of British men. About the same time, many of these bold countrymen of ours made their way into the then almost unknown and uncivilized country of Muscovy, where the descendants of some of them still live under names strangely altered from their original form. One of these, Patrick Gordon, was to have a great influence on the fate of Peter the Great and of Russia. It was no doubt largely owing to the teaching of Gordon and of the Swiss Lefort that even in his early boyhood Peter showed the greatest eagerness to gather around him a regular disciplined army.

Foreigners
in Russia.

Peter's
first army.

Russia at that time was still so far behind the rest of Europe that it possessed no properly organized army, the Streltsi, who were the strongest force the country owned, being more like the irregular bands of a robber chief than the orderly troops of a regular army. During the regency of the Princess Sophia, before he was yet seventeen, Peter amused himself at his country palace of Preobrazinski by forming and training a company of lads, some fifty in number. He found them all so completely without any idea of discipline, that in order to teach them what it meant he made each pass through all the different degrees, beginning from the lowest position. He himself, to set an example to the others, began as a drummer, then became a private

soldier, and afterwards a sergeant. This company soon increased, and afterwards became a regiment, known as the Preobrazinski Guards.

Even in these early days, Peter had begun to see that, if Russia was to rise to the level of the rest of Europe, it must have not only a regularly disciplined army, but also a navy. His father, Alexis, had seen this also, and had sent for ship-builders from Holland, by whom two vessels were built and afterwards taken down the river Volga to Astrakhan. But these vessels had been burned by the Cossacks of the district under their chief, who had at this time revolted from Russia. Peter had some frigates built on the borders of a great lake, on which he himself afterwards learned to navigate them.

The Princess Sophia had so little suspicion of her young brother's ambitious dreams that she regarded these early attempts to form an army and a navy as merely boyish amusements. When, however, Peter reached the age of seventeen, his powerful ruling spirit began to show itself, and Sophia is said to have plotted his assassination. At any rate, the Streltsi again revolted against him, and he was forced to take refuge in a monastery. General Gordon, however, who was now at the head of some five thousand men, mostly foreigners, marched to the help of the young tsar; the Streltsi were defeated, and Sophia was shut up in a convent, where she died some fifteen years afterwards.

Young though he was, Peter now began his independent rule. The first years of his reign were employed in forming and training an army, in which he was helped chiefly by Gordon and Lefort. In 1695, he felt himself strong enough

**Beginnings
of his navy.**

**Second re-
volt of the
Streltsi.**

**Peter begins
his reign,
1689.**

to attack the Turks on the south of his kingdom. He was resolved to break through the barriers by which his country was cut off from Western Europe; for he saw clearly that Russia could be raised from the almost barbarous state in which she then was only by being brought into close contact with her western neighbours. He was little more than a lad, very imperfectly educated, born in a half-barbarous country, and not without the wild love of pleasure and the fierce passions of the savage race from which he was descended; yet he had an ideal which raised him far above his countrymen, and even, so to speak, above himself—that was the welfare and civilization of the country of which he was monarch. All through his reign he laboured for this end, enduring for the sake of it toil and hardship and restraint.

The object of his expedition against the Turks was to gain possession of the Black Sea, through which he could secure that connection with the western countries of Europe which he saw to be necessary for the civilization of Russia. Gordon and Lefort commanded the army, Peter only accompanying the expedition as a volunteer, for he said he must learn before he could command. A few boats had been built, and sailed down the river Don to the town of Azov at its mouth, which the army besieged. At first, however, the siege was not successful, owing, it is said, to the treachery of the chief gunner, who deserted to the enemy. But the following year the town was a second time besieged; and this time it surrendered. In 1696, the victorious army made a triumphal entry into Moscow; and it is said that on this occasion the tsar, eager to show his nobles that military honour must be won, allowed all

Expedition
against the
Turks, 1695.

Taking of
Azov, 1696.

his generals to go before him in the procession, declaring that he held no rank in the army.

Hitherto, as we have seen, the most important work done in the country during Peter's reign had been done by foreigners—Dutchmen had built his ships, Scots and Swiss had commanded his army, which was largely composed of foreigners. Now Peter resolved that his native subjects should learn to do these things for themselves, and he therefore sent several young Russians into different countries of Europe—into Italy and Holland and Germany—to learn ship-building and the art of war.

**Peter's tour
in Europe,
1697.** Not content with this, he formed the startling plan of travelling into the other countries of Europe and himself learning these arts, which he saw to be so necessary for the improvement of his country. In 1697, accompanied by Lefort and two Russian generals, he set out on his travels, passing through the Baltic provinces of Livonia and Esthonia, which at that time belonged to Sweden, but were destined to become a part of the Russian dominions. At Berlin, the capital of what was to become the kingdom of Prussia, he was entertained by the future king; and it was during a feast here that he is said to have drawn his sword against his favourite Lefort in a sudden savage fit of temper. Afterwards, however, he begged pardon of Lefort, saying sadly that he, who was so anxious to reform his country, was unable to reform himself.

When he reached Holland, he settled down for a while in the village of Saardam, where there were great ship-building yards. Here he dressed himself like an ordinary Dutch workman, and under the name of Peter Mikhailov, or Peter Baas, as the Dutch called him, he worked in the dock-yards, learning to make with his own hands every part

**In the dock-
yards of
Saardam.**

of a ship. At the same time, he occasionally attended lectures on anatomy and other scientific subjects, and studied the various mechanical arts. He also sent numbers of skilled artisans to Russia. While he was in Holland he paid a visit to William III. at Utrecht, and that wise statesman formed a very high opinion of the originality and force of character of the young tsar. This is the only meeting of two of our "torch-bearers" which we have ever had to record. It is interesting to think of these two men together—both so remarkable, and yet, save in strength of purpose and energy, so utterly unlike each other in body and mind: the one weakly in health and unattractive in appearance, the other tall and striking in appearance, with a constitution powerful enough to endure any fatigue; the one calm, reserved, self-controlled, the other vehement and passionate.

Meeting
with
William III.

In the beginning of 1698, Peter went to England, where he was well received by the king. During the three months he remained there, he spent the most of his time, as he had done in Holland, in the dockyards, studying the English method of ship-building. He also engaged the services of many men skilled in the various arts and sciences, and sent them to Russia. Amongst others were Captain Perry, an able engineer, who has left an account of Russia during Peter's reign; and a Scottish mathematician named Ferguson, who is said to have been the first person to employ arithmetic in the Russian exchequer. It gives us a vivid idea of the barbarous state in which Russia then was, to read that previous to this time the public accounts of the kingdom were kept by means of balls strung on wire! That Peter himself, too, in spite of his powerful mind and his eager resolve

Peter in
England,
1698.

to civilize his country, was in some ways little better than a barbarian is proved by the condition in which we are told the house he inhabited in England was found after his departure. The trim flower-beds, smooth lawns, and carefully-clipped holly hedges of Sayes Court, on which the owner, Evelyn, had prided himself, were all destroyed, Peter; it is said, having amused himself in his leisure moments by being driven through the holly hedge in a wheel-barrow, and by leaping and practising gymnastics on the lawn; while within the house the furniture was smashed, the curtains were torn down, and nearly every lock was broken!

During Peter's absence from his kingdom, there broke out in Russia another revolt of the Streltsi, **Revolt of the Streltsi.** who were bitterly opposed to his reforms, and indignant that their tsar should have gone to foreign countries in order to learn how to govern. General Gordon marched against them, and completely defeated them; and Peter, on his arrival in Russia, inflicted most severe and cruel punishment upon them. The squares of Moscow flowed with the blood of these poor ignorant men, whose crime was that they belonged to a day that was gone and an order of things that was passing away.

Peter now set himself in earnest to carry out much needed reforms in state, in church, in education, and even in society. **Peter's reforms.** Roads were made, ships were built, colleges were founded, and the whole order of social entertainments was altered by permitting the presence of women, who, as is still customary in Eastern nations, used to live in the strictest seclusion.

The year after his return from his travels Peter lost his two most trusted supporters, Gordon and Lefort,

who seem to have died within a year of each other. These men were a great loss to the tsar, but he soon showed that he had now learned to stand alone. In 1700, he became involved in a war with Sweden. On the shores of the Baltic lay certain provinces in the possession of Sweden, some of which had at one time belonged to Russia and some to Poland. The King of Sweden, Charles XII., was little more than a boy—only fifteen years of age when, in the year of the Treaty of Ryswick and of Peter's travels, 1697, he came to the throne—and Peter thought he saw an opportunity to recover the Baltic provinces, and thus to gain that connection with Western Europe on which all his hopes were set. He therefore formed an alliance with the King of Poland, who led an army into the province of Livonia, while the Russians marched into Esthonia. But, young though he was, Charles showed that he was more than a match for the Kings of Poland and Russia. The "last of the Vikings," as he has been called, he was full of youthful energy and daring, and burning to distinguish himself. The Russians were besieging the town of Narva in Esthonia. With an army much smaller than theirs, Charles marched against them. Taking advantage of a heavy fall of snow, which was being driven in the faces of the Russians by the wind, and prevented them from seeing the numbers of the enemy, he attacked their intrenchments, and after a few hours' fighting was completely victorious. The number of Russians who were made prisoners of war was much greater than that of their conquerors! Peter, who was not present during this battle, received the news of the defeat in a way which showed his real greatness. He was prepared,

War with
Sweden,
1700.

Charles XII.
of Sweden.

Battle of
Narva,
1700.



he said, knowing well of what raw material his new troops were formed, for the Swedes to conquer at first ; “but they will teach us at length to conquer them.” He at once began making preparations for the future : the remnants of the defeated army were gathered together ; recruits were raised ; church-bells were made into cannon-balls ; smiths, and miners, and founders were set to work. Nor while making these preparations for the defence of his country did Peter neglect anything that could increase its welfare or commercial prosperity. Flocks were brought into Russia from Saxony for the sake of their fleece, and wool and paper manufactories

were set up. While Charles XII. was overrunning Poland, and defeating again and again the Polish king, the Russians, under the direction of their able tsar, were getting ready to defeat the conqueror.

Gradually the fortune of war changed: the Russians gained some small advantages, to which Charles paid no heed, and in 1702 their first really important victory was gained by the capture of **Capture of Noteburg, 1702.** Noteburg, a strongly fortified town which commands the river Neva. Peter, who well understood its importance, named the place Schlüsselburg, or the City of the Key. The following year, while war was still going on, he began the foundation of his new capital, St. Petersburg, the situation of which he chose with a view to his main object—"to cut a window looking towards Europe." On a dreary marsh in the cold region where the Neva pours into the Gulf of Finland, the new capital of all the Russias was destined to rise. People, who did not understand the tsar's main object, marvelled at his choice of such a spot on which to build a city. But heedless of what any one might say, heedless of the loss of the lives of thousands of his workmen from exposure to cold and to the unwholesome mists that rose from the **St. Petersburg founded, 1703.** marshy ground, Peter went on with the work which he believed would secure the future civilization of his dominions and the welfare of generations of Russians yet unborn. In about five months, a city—built, no doubt, of but rude materials—had risen in the midst of what had appeared an uninhabitable marsh, and Dutch vessels were already beginning to trade with it. Soon afterwards, strong fortifications were built on the island of Kronstadt to protect the new city.

The following year, while the Swedes were carrying

everything before them in Poland, Peter felt himself strong enough to attempt to wipe out the disgrace of his overthrow by them by attacking the town of Narva, where he had sustained his greatest defeat. After several assaults, the Russians made their way into the town, which they plundered and laid waste, treating the inhabitants with great cruelty. It is said that the tsar did everything in his power to put a stop to this violence and cruelty, and that he even slew with his own hand two of his soldiers who had disobeyed his orders to spare the lives of the inhabitants.

After the capture of Narva, Peter was master of the province of Ingria, south of the Gulf of Finland; and he placed it under the command of Alexander Menzikoff. Menzikoff, a man who, from selling pies in the streets of Moscow, rose to be the greatest general in Russia. It was one of the tsar's greatest gifts that he could recognize talent and merit wherever he saw them, and knew how to advance those who possessed them.

While these events were going on in the north, we must not forget that Great Britain and almost all Southern Europe were engaged in a great war. It will be remembered that William III. of England had died in 1702, just when preparations were being made for a war with France, rendered necessary by the ambition and want of faith of Louis XIV. In spite of his solemnly pledged word, Louis had acknowledged the son of James II. as King of Great Britain and Ireland, and had taken up arms to secure the kingdom of Spain for his grandson. On the death of William, as he left no child, Anne, the second daughter of James II., was acknowledged queen by the people of Great Britain. She declared her intention of going on

with the war, and Marlborough was placed in command of the British army. In the very year in which Peter the Great took possession of Narva, 1704, Marlborough, together with Prince Eugene of Savoy, gained a brilliant victory in one of the most important battles in history—the battle of Blenheim, in Ba-
Battle of
Blenheim,
1704.

The War of the Spanish Succession was still going on, and Marlborough had gained a second great victory at Ramillies in Belgium, when, in 1707, Charles XII. of Sweden, after completely subduing Poland and deposing her king, marched into Russia, declaring in his boastful way that he would “treat with the tsar nowhere but at Moscow.” He never fulfilled his boast. Instead of marching eastwards to Moscow, as he had at first intended, he was induced by Mazeppa, the chief of the Cossacks, to direct his journey southwards to the district known as the Ukraine. The severe cold of a Russian winter overtook the Swedish army as they marched onwards through a bleak and desolate country, where it was impossible to obtain either sufficient food or shelter. Hundreds of his men perished of cold and hunger before his eyes, yet the foolhardy king insisted on pushing forward, himself bravely sharing all the hardships with the humblest in his army.

And now the time had come for Peter to prove the truth of his prophecy that the Swedes would teach him through defeat to conquer them. In June 1709, the armies of Russia and Sweden met before the walls of the town of Poltava, or
Battle of
Poltava,
1709.
Pultowa, in the south-west of Russia. The Swedes, weakened though they were with fatigue and hardship, made a brave resistance; and their king was everywhere

seen in the thick of the fight, though in consequence of a wounded foot he had to be carried in a litter. But the battle ended in victory for Russia—a victory so complete that Charles, who had hitherto carried all before him, was forced to fly for refuge into Turkey with a mere handful of followers. There he remained for about five years, while he was gradually being stripped of all the territory which he and his
The fall of Sweden. great predecessor, Gustavus Adolphus, had won by conquest. The King of Poland, whom he had deposed, reascended the throne with the help of Peter, who at the same time made himself master of the provinces on the east of the Baltic which had belonged to Sweden, while the Kings of Denmark and Prussia also seized portions of the Swedish dominions. Through the wisdom and military skill of one great king, Sweden had risen to a high position among the states of Europe; through the rashness and imprudence of another, she lost all that she had gained, and ceased to be one of the great European powers.

Meantime, under the careful government of the tsar, Russia was rapidly becoming a powerful and civilized nation. His schemes of reform were for a while interrupted by a war with the Sultan of Turkey in 1711. In this war he and his army were on one occasion saved from utter destruction through the prudent counsel of his wife, who had accompanied him on the
The Empress Catherine. expedition. Like Peter's great general, Menzikoff, the Empress Catherine was of humble birth. Taken prisoner by the Russians at the siege of the town of Marienburg, she became a waiting-maid of the Princess Menzikoff, and while in the service of that princess attracted the notice of the tsar. Just before setting out on his Turkish campaign in 1711, Peter

privately acknowledged her as his wife. She accompanied him on the expedition, sharing all his fatigues and dangers, and supporting him with her lively spirits and good sense. She did more than this; for when the Russian army, weakened with long marches and scarcity of provisions, was surrounded by a Turkish army much superior in numbers, and cut off from supplies both of food and water, it was Catherine who managed to secure the safety of her husband and his followers when it appeared most hopeless. She gathered together all the jewels she had with her, and all the money which she could collect, and sent these by a trusty messenger to the Grand Vizier, who was in command of the Turkish army, with proposals of peace. The proposals were accepted, and the Russians were saved; Peter was preserved to carry on for some years yet his work of civilizing his country. His new navy and his new city continued to grow rapidly, and thousands of families were induced to leave their homes in other parts of Russia and to settle in St. Petersburg.

On his return from the Turkish campaign, his marriage with Catherine was publicly celebrated, and she accompanied him on his second European journey in 1716. This time he visited Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Paris, taking back with him to Russia skilled workers of all sorts. His work of civilization continued to grow; but there were those in Russia who liked the old barbarous order of things better than all the tsar's reforms, and these formed plots and conspiracies against him. Amongst them, it is said, was Peter's own son by his first marriage, Alexis by name. The story of this prince forms the darkest part of his father's life. In the midst of his constant efforts to raise his country, the bitter

Peter's second journey,
1716-17.

Alexis.

thought would often cross the mind of Peter that, after his death, the work to which he had devoted his life would be undone, and Russia once more sink into barbarism. For Alexis, whose days were passed in idle and base pleasures, took no interest in war or in politics, and was even known to dislike all his father's reforms, and to declare that when he was king he should make Moscow his capital once more. Peter several times rebuked his son for his idle and useless life, and at length, just before setting out on his second journey in Europe, informed him that, as he was not fit to govern, he must give up his claim to the throne of Russia and retire into a monastery. Alexis declared himself ready to do this; but when his father had started on his journey, he fled to Germany, where he remained concealed for some time.

When he was discovered, he was brought to trial by Peter's orders, and condemned to death for treason. The manner of his death is not known, but it has left a dark blot on the character of the tsar, his father.

For some seven years after the death of his unhappy son, Peter carried on his labours for the improvement of his country. He died in 1725, at the age of fifty-three, worn out with his life of constant hard work and anxiety. Half-savage though he was, no monarch ever desired more eagerly than Peter the Great to raise his country from barbarism; none ever saw more clearly how this was to be done, or with more energy did it. In spite of his faults of character, the fact that he devoted his life to the fulfilment of a great and worthy end gives him a just claim to his title of the Great.

Death of
Alexis, 1718.

Death of
Peter, 1725.

CHAPTER X.

FREDERICK THE GREAT—THE RISE OF PRUSSIA— FOUNDATION OF UNITY OF GERMANY.

WHILE Peter the Great was carrying on his work of strengthening and civilizing the barbarous country of which he was monarch, another kingdom had arisen, west of Russia, which was afterwards to become one of the greatest in Europe. This was the kingdom of Prussia, which dates from the year 1700. The country previously known as Prussia is the low stretch of land, covered with lakes and forests—boggy in some parts and sandy in others, but mostly rich and pastoral—which lies on the south of the Baltic, and is watered by the river Vistula. Here, during the Middle Ages, when the crusades were going on, and the minds of all the Christians in Europe were turned towards the Holy Land, there dwelt a heathen tribe or tribes of people—Letts or Lithuanians—a fierce and warlike people of whom but little was known to the rest of Europe, except that they seemed to live chiefly by fishing for and selling the amber that is found on the Baltic shores. Long after their neighbours the Poles had become Christians, the inhabitants of Prussia still clung to their heathen faith, whatever it was. Several attempts were made to convert them, but without success, the first being by Saint Adalbert in the tenth

Early
history of
Prussia.

century. In the thirteenth century a number of the Teutonic order of knights resolved to settle in Prussia, and to endeavour to teach the natives Christianity.

This order of knights had been founded during the third crusade—the one in which Richard Cœur-de-Lion

The Teutonic Knights in Prussia. took part—by some German merchants at the siege of Acre in Palestine, who, out of pity for the sufferings of the sick and wounded in the crusading army, formed out of the sails of their ships tents to shelter them, and did all in their power to relieve them. On their return home after the crusade was over, their grandmaster had his head-quarters at Venice, and it was while he was there that he was requested to send some of his knights into Prussia for the conversion of the people. So to Prussia the knights went, and there they fought, and taught, and grew strong, and conquered. German colonists followed them into the wild country; the land was ploughed and cultivated, cities were built, and all seemed prosperous. But after a while prosperity was followed, as it was in the days of Rome's greatness, by love of ease and luxury. Gradually the knights sank; they lost their ideal, their spirit of chivalry, and then their strength. Meantime their neighbours the Poles were becoming stronger, and

Battle of Tannenburg, 1410. in 1410 defeated them completely in the battle of Tannenburg. Little more than half a century later, so weak had the knights become that they were forced to give up to Poland the best part of their territory, West Prussia.

To the south-west of Prussia proper lies the province of Brandenburg, in which Berlin is situated. **The house of Brandenburg.** Just at the time when the Teutonic order had begun rapidly to sink, this province had passed into the possession of a powerful family, the

house of Hohenzollern; and as the knights sank lower and lower, Brandenburg continued steadily to increase in strength. In the beginning of the sixteenth century—about the time of the Reformation—Albert, a younger son of the house of Brandenburg, was chosen grand-master of the Teutonic order. But so weak and corrupt did he find the order that, after consultation with the great reformer Luther, whose views he had adopted, he resolved to disband the knights, and to form Prussia into a dukedom.

A century later this dukedom came into the possession of the reigning Duke or Elector of Brandenburg, and the two provinces, together with the other possessions of the house, formed a powerful electorate. The union of the two provinces took place in the first year of the Thirty Years' War, 1618. It will perhaps be remembered that Gustavus Adolphus married a daughter of the house of Brandenburg, and that he was afterwards hampered by the weak policy of his brother-in-law, the Elector George-William.

Prussia and
Branden-
burg united,
1618.

The son of this George-William was a very different man from his father. Frederick-William is known as the "Great Elector;" and no doubt he did much to earn the title. The electorate, which had fallen very low in consequence of the weak government of his father and the terrible ravages of the long war, he restored to strength and prosperity. He fought battles, drained bogs, cut canals, encouraged trade; and died in the year 1688, just when William, Prince of Orange, was thinking of setting out for England to become William III. of Great Britain. The wife of the Great Elector was the aunt of William III., being a princess of that house of Orange-Nassau from which so

The "Great
Elector."

many distinguished persons have sprung. She was also the great-grandmother of Frederick the Great.

It was the son of the Great Elector who, in 1700, became the first King of Prussia—Frederick I. of Prussia.

Frederick I. He was not yet king when Peter the Great, on his first journey through Europe, visited Berlin. Before Peter's second journey in 1716–17, Frederick I. had died. He died in the year 1713, the year when the Treaty of Utrecht was concluded, which put an end to the War of the Spanish Succession. In this war the troops of Prussia had taken part on the side of the allies against France; and the crown-prince, afterwards King Frederick-William, and father of our "torch-bearer," had himself fought with Marlborough.

This Frederick-William was a strange man—rude, and fierce, and passionate. He has sometimes been called the "miser king," in consequence of his

Frederick-William I. extreme carefulness in money matters both in private and public affairs. His father had loved to surround himself with splendour and luxury; Frederick-William had everything about him, from his clothes to the furniture of his palace and his retinue, as plain and even as bare as possible. He showed the same thrift and carefulness in the management of his kingdom. No penny that could be saved was spent on external pomp and splendour; while the revenues of the kingdom were used to improve the land, set up manufactures, and above all to increase and strengthen his army. His army was Frederick-William's great hobby—he had a perfect passion for drilling and recruiting

The Potsdam Guards. it. Carlyle says of him that he drilled the whole people, and names him the "drill-sergeant of the Prussian nation." The most remarkable part of his army were his Potsdam Guards,

a regiment of foot composed of the tallest men that could be bought or stolen in any country of Europe: all of them, we are told, were well over six feet in height, and some even over eight! Many of them came from Russia; others from Norway, and Ireland, and different parts of Germany. If Frederick-William was sparing of money in general, he does not seem to have grudged to spend it liberally in forming and supporting this giant regiment. He had agents all over Europe engaged in searching for tall men and bribing them to join the Prussian army, and we are told that it cost him £1,200 to get one very tall Irishman shipped to Prussia!

Though he devoted so much of his time and money to strengthening his army, Frederick-William does not seem to have been anxious for war; indeed, he rather avoided it. Only one war do we hear of in his reign—the war with Sweden in 1715, to which allusion was made in the last chapter. The year of this war is memorable as being the last of the long reign of Louis XIV. of France, who died after having, for more than half a century, held all Europe in awe. The year before had died Queen Anne of England, the younger daughter of James II., leaving no family; and she had been succeeded by George Louis, Elector of Hanover, as George I. of Great Britain and Ireland. It will be remembered how, more than a century before, Elizabeth, daughter of James I., had married the Elector Palatine, who for one short year was King of Bohemia. Their daughter Sophia had married the Elector of Hanover, and her son, George Louis, great-grandson of James I., was now the nearest *Protestant* heir to the English throne. The sister of George I. married Frederick I. of Prussia, and became the mother of Frederick-

Death of
Louis XIV.,
1715.

Accession of
George I.
of England,
1714.

William ; and Sophia, the daughter of George I., became the wife of Frederick-William, her cousin, and the mother of Frederick the Great, so that in the veins of our " torch-bearer " there flowed some of the same blood as in those of Queen Victoria.

Considering his father's love of drill, it is only what we should expect that the little Frederick, when only five years old, should already have begun to be subjected to a sort of military discipline.

**Frederick's
early
drilling.**

He was placed in a mimic regiment of little boys, and was regularly drilled, until in two or three years he was able to drill the regiment himself. Perhaps being forced to this sort of work so early, gave the boy a distaste for it. At any rate, Frederick-William does not seem to have thought that his son showed

**His quarrel
with his
father.**

sufficient love of soldiering, and accused him of having " effeminate tastes," because the boy loved music, and verses, and tales, and did not care for hunting. As he grew up, his father seemed to take almost a dislike to him, and many were the violent scenes that took place between them. The poor young prince's life was very unhappy ; and at length, when he was eighteen, he seems to have made up his mind to escape in disguise from Prussia—being driven to this, it is said, by a caning which the king had administered to him. While on a journey with his father, he, with one or two friends, arranged a plan of flight ; but on the very morning that he was to make his escape, the secret was discovered. The anger of the king was furious. Frederick, who had become major in the Potsdam Guards before he was quite fifteen, was now colonel of that regiment ; and his attempted escape was regarded as desertion from the army. He was treated as a deserter, arrested, and imprisoned in the fortress of the little town

of Küstrin. Here he passed several months in a single room, bare of furniture; while all who had been friendly to him in any way were punished by banishment or imprisonment, and one who had aided in his plan of flight, Lieutenant Katte, was by the king ordered to be put to death at Küstrin. The young prince, we are told, saw him pass his window to the scaffold, and fainted at the sight. Frederick himself had been tried by court-martial, and condemned to death; but his life was spared through the entreaties of the king's ministers and the request of foreign courts. In less than a fortnight after the death of his friend Katte, he was ready to express penitence for what he had done, and to swear an oath of submission to the king in future. He was now released from prison; but he was not, till some time after, restored to his old position in the army.

His
submission.

After this terrible lesson in the duty of obedience, he contrived to get on better with the king. How far he had been to blame in the past it is not easy to tell, but there can be no doubt that he was not entirely blameless—that his life was not free from sins and follies. Then, like his mother and his sister Wilhelmina, he had been eager for a double marriage alliance with England, of which the king did not approve; and besides this, his love of refinement and culture was offensive to the blunt, half-savage king. But after his release from imprisonment there were no more outbreaks between him and his father. For the next six years he lived a very quiet, peaceful life, occupied with drilling the regiment of which he was colonel, with study, and even with writing. He corresponded with many literary men, amongst others with the great French writer, Voltaire. When, in 1740, Frederick-

Reconcilia-
tion of
father and
son.

William lay on his deathbed at Potsdam, he was able to say, as he put his arms round the prince's neck, that he was content to die since he was leaving behind him so worthy a son and successor.

Death of
Frederick-
William,
1740.

The death of Frederick-William was followed, in a few months, by another, which was to be the cause of much disturbance in Europe—that of the Emperor

Charles VI. Charles left no son; but by a law passed some years before, known as the Pragmatic Sanction.

Pragmatic Sanction, his daughter, the beautiful Maria Theresa, was regarded as his successor in the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria—in the dukedom of Austria and the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia. Though, at the time it was passed, all the European powers had consented to the Pragmatic Sanction, there were now many who were ready to dispute the succession of Maria Theresa in some part or other of the Austrian dominions.

To the south-east of Prussia proper lies the province of Silesia. At the time of the death of Charles VI.

Frederick II. this province was in the possession of Austria; marches into but the house of Brandenburg had old claims Silesia. to it. Frederick II. thought the time had

now come to make good these claims; and thanks to his father's careful management, he had everything ready to his hand. Before the year 1740 had ended, he had marched into Silesia with a large part of his splendidly drilled army; and on the first day of the new year he took possession of Breslau, the capital of the province. So far, he had met with but little opposition, as the natives were largely Protestants, and were inclined to favour a Protestant king.

Meantime an ambassador had been sent to Vienna to



PRUSSIA IN 1740.

offer to Maria Theresa the support of Prussia against all attacks upon the dominions of Austria, provided that she would give up Silesia to Frederick. These offers were refused, and Frederick now formed an alliance with France against Austria, and continued to advance into Silesia. In the spring of 1741, the Prussian soldiers showed the good results of their years of drill in the victory over the Austrian forces at Mollwitz.

**Battle of
Mollwitz,
1741.**

While the Prussians were marching into Silesia, Austria was about to be attacked from another quarter.

Charles Albert, Elector of Bavaria, had laid claim to a part of the Austrian dominions. The French resolved to support his claim. Their reason for doing so was no doubt the desire to weaken Austria. Since the time of Richelieu, the policy of French statesmen had been to try to keep their country supreme in Europe, and to allow no other to rival her. They preferred that Germany should be divided into a number of small states rather than that one strong power should grow up there. True to this policy, France now formed an alliance with Spain and the Elector of Bavaria. At the head of an army lent by France, the elector entered Austria, and after carrying everything before him, had himself crowned King of Bohemia at Prague, the capital of that country.

The unfortunate Maria Theresa, attacked on all sides, appealed for help to her Hungarian subjects, by whom she was crowned Queen of Hungary in 1741. Soon a Hungarian army was in the field; and help, too, came from England—the only country which at this time supported the cause of the young queen. In order to be able to employ all her strength against the French, she now, though very reluctantly, made a treaty of peace with Frederick, by which he kept Silesia. Thus the first Silesian war was brought to an end, and Frederick was free for a while to turn his attention to making up the losses in his army and strengthening the position he had won.

The war between France and Austria continued. Early in 1742, the Elector of Bavaria was elected Emperor of Germany, a title which Maria Theresa had hoped would be bestowed upon her husband, the Grand-Duke of Tuscany. At the time when the election took

place, however, fortune had begun to favour the young queen—the French were driven out of Bohemia, and the Austrian army carried the war into the dominions of the new emperor. In the following year, 1743, an army of English and Austrians gained an important victory over the French at **Battle of Dettingen, 1743.** Dettingen. This battle is interesting to English people chiefly as being the last at which an English king was present in person. George II., who had joined the army shortly before the battle took place, has gained much credit for the courage which he displayed on the occasion, though his nephew, Frederick the Great, who was naturally inclined to be sarcastic, gives a rather comic picture of him.

Maria Theresa ought now to have been content to put an end to the war. She had recovered the dominions of the house of Austria, and even obtained possession of Bavaria—the Emperor of Germany was almost a pauper. But she was resolved to strip him of his title as well as of his land, and also to punish France for the part it had taken against her. The cause of Maria Theresa was now no longer the cause of justice, the cause of the oppressed, and it has been said that the English should now have given it up. But they did not. The following year, 1744, the French, who had hitherto taken part in the war only as the allies of Bavaria, now openly declared war against England and Austria, and fighting began in the Austrian Netherlands.

In the same year, the second Silesian war broke out. Frederick had given his vote, as **Second Silesian war, 1744.** Elector of Brandenburg, for Charles Albert, and he no doubt held himself bound to some extent to support the emperor whom he had helped to elect; but perhaps his real motive for renewing the war was that he feared

that Austria, now that she had become so strong, would try to recover Silesia. He knew well how unwillingly Maria Theresa had ceded it to him.

During the two years of peace he had devoted his attention to making up the losses of his army, and had very much improved his cavalry, which in his father's time had been much inferior to the infantry. All his arrangements were so good that he was able to take the field almost at any moment. "Some countries," it was said, "have a longer sword than Prussia, but none can

unsheathe it so soon." The second Silesian war lasted about two years; in 1746 it was brought to an end by the Treaty of Dresden.

It was on his return home after this war that the title of "the Great" was bestowed on Frederick. During the two years of the war he had shown so much courage and military skill, so much moderation and prudence, that he had gained the respect and admiration, not only of his own subjects, but also of all Europe. By the Peace of Dresden, Frederick kept possession of Silesia, while he consented to acknowledge the husband of Maria Theresa as Emperor of Germany, under the title of Francis I. Charles Albert had died in the previous year.

It was while the second Silesian war was going on that, in Great Britain, the last great attempt was made by the dethroned Stuarts to regain the crown. We all know the romantic story of Charles Edward, the grandson of James II., the Young Pretender, as he was called to distinguish him from his father, who was known as the Old Pretender. We all know how he landed in the north of Scotland in 1745—the year that was celebrated afterwards as the 'Forty-five; how he set up his standard and gathered

round him some Highlanders faithful to his house ; how he entered Edinburgh, and proclaimed his father king ; how he defeated an English army at Prestonpans, and was himself defeated hopelessly at Culloden ; how he wandered in disguise about the country with a price upon his head ; and how he escaped at length through the courage and devotion of the famous Flora Macdonald.

For ten years after the close of the second Silesian war, Prussia enjoyed peace ; but the war in Europe went on for some two years longer, till it was ended in 1748 by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. During those ten years of peace, Frederick was far from idle. He was occupied with the improvement of his country in every respect—of its laws, its administration, its army, and above all its manufactures ; and he also devoted much time to learning and literature. He was himself an author, and wrote a “Memoir of the House of Brandenburg,” and a poem on “The Art of War.” Both are written in French, the language which Frederick generally spoke and wrote.

Treaty of
Aix-la-
Chapelle,
1748.

It was well that, during these years of peace, Frederick did not neglect to strengthen and practise his army, and to study the art of war, for a formidable union of his enemies was preparing against him. Maria Theresa was still bitterly grieving for the loss of Silesia, which she was resolved to recover. The Empress Elizabeth of Russia, daughter of Peter the Great, was indignant at some sarcastic remarks of Frederick’s about herself, which had been reported to her ; and besides, she thought that Prussia was becoming too powerful a neighbour, as did also Poland and Saxony. Even France, which had been his ally during the last wars, was now no longer friendly to

Coalition
against
Prussia.

him, in consequence, it is said, of his having given offence to Madame de Pompadour, a lady who had great power over the king, Louis XV. Their common enmity to Frederick drew together France and Austria, who had been enemies for centuries, and they formed an alliance against him, which was joined by Russia, Poland, Saxony, and Sweden. The territories of Prussia were to be divided among the other powers, Silesia being restored to Austria, while Frederick was to be allowed to keep only the duchy of Brandenburg.

In the year 1753, Frederick discovered what was preparing for him, through the disclosures of a government clerk at Dresden, whom the Prussian minister there bribed to give him copies of the government papers. One can imagine how he felt when he discovered that he, alone and unsupported by any ally, was to be attacked by so many great powers of Europe, and how all his thoughts were bent on the question of how he was to meet the threatened blow. Meantime, a war broke out between England and France, of which we shall hear more in the next chapter. It began with disputes between the two countries about their colonies in India and America, and ended in the great Seven Years' War, in which Frederick the Great was the chief actor. Early in the year 1756, knowing with what he was threatened, Frederick made an alliance with England, which during the Seven Years' War was the only country that supported him.

Frederick has been blamed for striking the first blow in his third war, as he had done in his first and second. But we must remember that he knew that Austria and the countries allied with her were only waiting till their prepara-

Frederick
discovers
the
coalition.

Alliance
with
England.

Beginning
of the
Seven Years'
War, 1756.

tions were complete in order to attack him. He decided wisely that it was better to meet his foes one by one than all together. In August 1756, when England and France were fighting at sea, he dashed into Saxony with a large and powerful army. But his first year's campaign did not do much for him. It gave Saxony into his hands; but his forces had been spent in reducing the weakest of his foes, and Austria was as strong as ever. It was now that Frederick showed his real strength and greatness. He was surrounded by enemies; the empire had declared against him; France, Austria, Poland, Russia, and Sweden were armed or arming against him; England seemed at the moment capable of giving him but little help; his kingdom was new and comparatively small, and its dominions, separated by portions of hostile territory, were easy to attack but difficult to defend. Yet in spite of all the odds against him, Frederick resolved to maintain the independence of his kingdom, which was destined to become the centre of a united and Protestant German empire. That he was fully alive to the terrible danger of his position we know from his secret instructions to one of his ministers, and also from this, that he carried about with him some poison, which he intended to take, should his fortunes become desperate, rather than live to see the downfall of his kingdom.

In the following year, 1757, he again began the war with an invasion of his enemies' territory; but it was against his strongest foe, Austria, that he made his second attack. Early in the year he led his troops into Bohemia, and there, before the walls of the capital, he gained a brilliant victory over the Austrian army. But this victory was not gained without the loss of a large part of the Prussian

**Battle of
Prague,
1757.**

troops ; and when, a month later, they met a new Austrian army near the small town of Kolin, they were utterly defeated and put to flight.

Defeat at
Kolin,
1757.

The losses of his army were so great that Frederick was forced to retire from Bohemia into Saxony. It now seemed as if Prussia must be completely crushed by the great forces arrayed against her in her weakened condition. All but Frederick himself looked upon her position as hopeless. He, indeed, was plunged into deep gloom, but he was not in despair. When, the day after the defeat at Kolin, what was left of his favourite regiment of foot passed before him, silent tears rolled down his cheeks as he missed one after another of the men, all of whom he knew personally ; yet it was during the retreat that he is said to have remarked, "Don't you know, then, that every man must have his reverses ? It appears I am to have mine."

Meantime a French army had entered North Germany, and was carrying everything before it, though the son of George II., the Duke of Cumberland, had been stationed with an army of Hanoverians and English to prevent its progress. On all sides Prussia was threatened : on the east a large Russian army was already laying waste the province of East Prussia ; on the south, the Austrian forces lay ready to invade Silesia ; on the west and north-west the armies of France and the empire were threatening Brandenburg itself ; and on the north Sweden was making preparations to invade Pomerania. Only a man of the greatest strength of character could even have thought of attempting to extricate his country from such a situation ; only a man of the greatest military genius could have accomplished the task. It was just

Position of
Prussia.

after the defeat at Kolin that the news reached the king of the death of his mother, the only person, except perhaps his sister Wilhelmina, whom he seems to have deeply loved. Even amid all the cares and anxieties which at that time occupied his mind, the news overwhelmed him with grief, and for two or three days he retired into solitude.

The defeat at Kolin took place in June. By the beginning of September, Frederick was marching westwards to meet the allied French and Imperial army under General Soubise. But it was not till the beginning of November that the two armies encountered each other at Rossbach. Hearing that Frederick was advancing against him, the French general had retreated among the hills of Thuringia, where **Battle of Rossbach, 1757.** it was almost impossible to attack him; and it was not till after two dreary months of waiting that the King of Prussia had the opportunity he was longing for of meeting his foe in the open field. Rossbach is a village a few miles west of Lützen, where Gustavus Adolphus so nobly fell. Here Frederick, with some twenty-two thousand men, gained, over an army almost three times that number, the most splendid victory he had yet won—one of the most brilliant and important victories in history. The victory was entirely due to the skill with which the Prussian king took advantage of a mistaken movement on the part of the enemy.

A few days after the battle, Frederick was on his way back to Silesia with the best part of his army. During his absence the Austrians had entered that province, and the Prussian general who had been left in command had lost one **Silesia in the hands of the Austrians.** strong position after another. On the tenth day of his march, Frederick learned that Breslau had fallen into

the hands of the enemy; but he still advanced, though the Austrians laughed at the idea of his encountering them with his "Potsdam guard-parade," as they called his small army. But "I will attack them if they stand on the steeples of Breslau!" said Frederick. And he

did—at Leuthen, on 5th December, just a month after Rossbach—and won a victory which Napoleon Buonaparte afterwards said

was enough to have placed him among the greatest generals in history, even if he had done nothing else. The result was that he recovered Silesia.



Rossbach and Leuthen had saved Prussia from instant destruction, but that was all. She was still surrounded on all sides by powerful foes. The following year a

great Russian army made its way into Brandenburg, pillaging, burning, and destroying all that came in its way. In a battle at Zorndorf, Frederick defeated it, but not without the loss of

a great number of his best forces; and scarcely two months later he was himself defeated by the Austrian army at Hochkirch, in Saxony. But the Austrian general did not take advantage of his success, as he might have done, and Frederick still remained in possession of Saxony. Things now looked very dark for Prussia. The veterans of the army had nearly all been killed or incapacitated, and where were men to be found to supply their place in a small country like Prussia? Then money began to fail, and had it not been for the sums received from England, Frederick must have come to a stand-still for want of means to carry on the war.

The next year, 1759, the fortunes of Prussia reached their lowest ebb. At Kunersdorf, near Frankfort, the Prussian army met with the most crushing defeat it had yet encountered, from an army of Russians and Austrians. It was now for the first time that Frederick, who has been blamed for the loss of the battle, gave way to utter despair. Ever in the thick of the fight, he was heard to exclaim bitterly, "Is there not a bullet that can reach me?" After the battle he even gave up the command to one of his generals. But two or three days later he had recovered from his depression, and was eager to make another attempt, which also proved a failure. All now believed that Prussia must be completely crushed. Meanwhile, in the north-west, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, with an army of Hanoverians and English, had won a splendid victory over the French at Minden, due chiefly to the valour of the six English regiments, which ever since have borne "Minden" on their colours.

In the campaign of 1760, Frederick showed his

enemies that he was not yet exhausted, though, as he said himself, ill-luck still seemed to follow him like his shadow, and the year began with failures and disappointments. But just when everything seemed blackest, two victories, those of Liegnitz in Silesia and Torgau in Saxony, saved Prussia once more. At Liegnitz, three hostile armies almost surrounded the Prussians, and it seemed as if they must soon be completely hemmed in; but Frederick succeeded not only in getting them out of their perilous position, but in defeating and dispersing his enemies.

But all the skill of Frederick could not have saved Prussia much longer against the united forces of the greatest nations of Europe; and when, in the following year, England refused to help him any longer with money, it appeared as if the king must be forced to give up the struggle for want of means to carry it on. But an unexpected stroke of luck prevented this. In the very beginning of 1762, the Tsarina Elizabeth of Russia died, and was succeeded by her nephew, Peter III., a weak young man, who had a boyish admiration of Frederick. No sooner did he ascend the throne of Russia than he hastened to make peace with Prussia; and not content with that, ordered his army in Germany to support Frederick. Peter only reigned some six months, being deposed by his wife, the celebrated Catherine II., and afterwards strangled; but Catherine, though she did not support the King of Prussia, confirmed the peace with him. Frederick thus got rid of one of his powerful enemies, and in the next year they dropped off one by one, till only Austria was left. In 1763, the Seven Years' War was ended by the Peace of Hubertsburg between Austria and Prussia.

Liegnitz
and Torgau,
1760.

Loss of
English
support,
1761.

End of the
Seven Years'
War, 1763.

By this war Austria had gained nothing, and Frederick had lost nothing—nothing, that is, but his finest troops and the revenues of his country—and he had won the reputation of being the greatest general of his time. He still kept his hold of Silesia, for the sake of which the war had been begun.

In spite of the terrible hardships through which he had passed, the fatigues, anxieties, and worries he had endured, Frederick continued to live for three and twenty years after the end of the war, occupied, as he said himself, “like a dog that has fought bitterly until he is worn out,” in “*licking his wounds*,” or rather, the wounds of his unfortunate country. Such a miserable Prussia as he found when he was able to look about him! Houses and even whole villages in ruins; fields untilled and unsown; people reduced to starvation; no horses to plough, no seed to sow. Frederick set himself to try to remedy all this. Fortunately, he was not in debt, and he had a large sum put by for the next campaign, which never came off. This sum he employed in building up the ruined houses, and in buying corn for the starving people and seed for the unsown land. And gradually peace and prosperity smiled once more on Prussia.

One action has stained the memory of Frederick’s last years—that is, his share in the partition of Poland. At the close of the war he formed a close alliance with Russia, the only country which was now friendly with him. The tsarina, Catherine II., looked with eyes of longing on Poland, her western neighbour; and when the King of Poland died, and difficulties and divisions arose among the people, she found an opportunity for interfering in the affairs

Frederick
after the
war.

The
partition
of Poland,
1772.

of the country. Gradually Poland came almost completely under the control of Russia, and at length some patriotic Poles rose up in arms to set their country free. Catherine sent Russian troops against them, and Frederick helped his ally Russia with money. The Turks supported the Poles, and Austria, too, threatened to take



PRUSSIA IN 1772.

the field against Russia. To prevent this, the bribe of part of the territory of Poland was offered to her. The noble Maria Theresa was indignant at the offer, but she was not now all-powerful in her country. Austria accepted the bribe. While all the other countries of

Europe cried out against the injustice of the act, Russia, Prussia, and Austria divided among them the territory of unhappy Poland. Frederick received for his share West Prussia, which, it will be remembered, was taken from the Teutonic Knights by Poland in the fifteenth century. The possession of West Prussia formed the kingdom of Prussia into a continuous stretch of country on the shores of the Baltic, instead of a number of separate dominions.

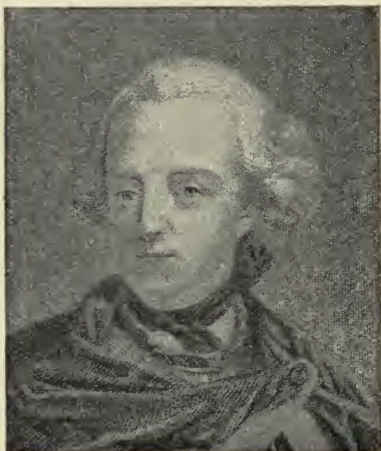
No great wars occurred during the remaining years of Frederick's life. He for his part was anxious to avoid war, knowing how much his country required a long peace. In 1777, he led an army into the field against the Emperor Joseph, the son of Maria Theresa; but the dispute was settled without bloodshed.

The last important action of his life was the formation of the Fürstenbund, or League of

**The League
of Princes,
1785.**

Princes, which was an alliance of the princes of Germany to resist the power of Austria. We remember how, during the Thirty Years' War, the great misfortune of Germany was that it was not a united *nation*, but consisted of a number of independent little states, often at war with one another. The great importance of Frederick in the history of Europe—what entitles him to be called a “torch-bearer”—depends on this, that he prepared the way for the union of Germany, for the formation of one German-speaking *nation* out of a number of small independent principalities. It cannot be said that this was his ideal—was what he fought for during the Seven Years' War—but the formation of the League of Princes shows that there had risen in his mind at least a far-off dream of a united Germany—a dream which was to be realized in our own century by the great Prince Bismarck.

Be that as it may, no one can read the story of the Seven Years' War, or look at the map of Prussia before and after Frederick's reign, and refuse to admit his claim to be called, as his people styled him in his own lifetime, Frederick *the Great*. He died in 1786, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, having reigned nearly forty-seven years.



FREDERICK THE GREAT.

CHAPTER XI.

ROBERT CLIVE—THE FOUNDATION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

ONLY a few months after the death of Peter the Great in 1725, when Frederick of Prussia, then a lad of some twelve or thirteen years, was preparing to become major of the Potsdam giants by drilling his youthful regiment, there was born in Shropshire in England the future founder of the British empire in India, Robert Clive. George I. was then King of England; and Sir Isaac Newton, who had seen, during his long life, so many changes of government, was still living. Two years later, in 1727, both the king and the great scientist died.

Birth of
Clive, 1725.

The reign of George I. had been on the whole a peaceful one. The great War of the Spanish Succession, in which England had played so important a part, had been ended by the Peace of Utrecht just the year before his reign began; and it was not till the outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession, of which some account has been given in the preceding chapter, that the people of Great Britain were once more engaged in an important war. George I., it will be remembered, was the grandfather of Frederick the Great, his daughter being the wife of Frederick-William I. of Prussia. He was also the great-great-great-grandfather of our Queen Victoria.

The reign of
George I.

George II. succeeded his father on the throne in 1727.

Reign of
George II.

The first twelve years of his reign were peaceful, owing to the fact that the government of the country was at that time in the hands of Sir Robert Walpole, who was eager above everything to secure peace. The king himself, however, and the country in general were not so pacific, and in 1739 Walpole found himself dragged, against his will, into a war with Spain. It began with disputes in the Spanish Main, where Drake had achieved such dashing feats more than a century and a half before. The Spaniards wished to keep the rich trade of that part of the world almost entirely in their own hands; and the English, who had now grown very powerful at sea, naturally wished to have a share of it. English vessels, in spite of existing treaties, carried on a regular system of smuggling, which the Spaniards naturally tried to prevent. Stories were told in England of the cruelty with which the Spaniards treated the captains and crews of English vessels which had been caught smuggling. These stories roused the indignation of the English people; and, besides, English pride was insulted by the claim of the Spaniards to the right of searching British vessels. One story in particular—the story of a ship captain named Jenkins, who, though not found guilty of smuggling, had had his ear torn off by the Spaniards—whether true or not, had the greatest effect in exciting the feelings of the people of England against Spain, and Walpole found himself compelled to declare war. This was in 1739, as has been said, the year before the death of the Emperor of Germany and the outbreak of the first Silesian war.

At that time Robert Clive was a boy of about fourteen years, at school in England—a proud, hot-headed, high-

spirited boy, with a somewhat violent temper and a strong will, not fond of lessons, but devoted to fighting. Even before he was seven years old this love of fighting showed itself, and caused much anxiety to his relatives. Some years later, he made himself the leader of a band of mischievous boys in Market Drayton, where he was at school. These boys made themselves so much feared by the shop-keepers of the place, in consequence of the tricks they played, that they were able to demand tribute of apples and other dainties in return for promises to spare the shop windows. Besides possessing a headstrong temper and a love of fighting, Clive was even in his boyhood distinguished for courage; and we are told how he made the people of Market Drayton shudder with horror by clambering out upon one of the stone water-spouts on the tall steeple of the old church, and calmly seating himself upon it. He was not yet eighteen years of age when, in 1743, he obtained an appointment as writer or clerk in the service of the English East India Company, and left his native country for the warm climate of India. It was the year of the battle of Dettingen, the War of the Austrian Succession still going on, though Frederick the Great had for the time retired from the conflict in possession of Silesia.

Clive's boy-
hood and
character.

He goes
to India,
1743.

Clive's voyage to India makes us realize vividly the difference in some respects between *then* and *now*. It was more than a year after leaving England that he reached his destination, with empty pockets, and even with some debts which he had made during the nine months that he was detained in the Brazils. Very different, too, was the India in which he arrived from the India of to-day. Let us glance for a moment at the country as it is shown in the

Condition
of India
in 1744.

map (page 245), and also at some of the chief events in its previous history. India is a vast peninsula in the south of Asia, the greater extent of which lies within the tropic of Cancer. On the north, where it is broadest, it is cut off from the rest of Asia by the lofty range of the Himalaya Mountains, the highest in the world; on the south, where it narrows to a point, it ends in Cape Comorin. Within its vast extent the country contains almost every source of wealth: it is watered by many fine rivers; the soil is rich, and capable of producing in different regions almost every kind of grain, from wheat to rice, and almost every kind of fruit, besides sugar, cotton, indigo, tea, and many other valuable plants; timber of all sorts is grown; and the minerals include gold and silver, coal, and precious stones.

Here, at a time when the inhabitants of the British islands were mere savages, there lived a people, the

**Early
history of
India.**

Hindus, who had already reached a high state of civilization. They were not originally inhabitants of India; but they were settled there centuries before the birth of Christ—they were settled there when, in the fourth century B.C., Alexander the Great led his army across the Indus. For centuries after the invasion of Alexander the Great, we know but little of the history of India. About the end of the seventh century of our era, the Arabs, who, it will be remembered, had about that time begun to be powerful,

**Moham-
medan
invasions.**

made the first of a series of Mohammedan invasions of India. During the Middle Ages, Turks, and Tatars, and Mongols successively swept down upon the rich country, and plundered, and sacked, and laid waste. At length, in the

**Baber and
the Great
Moguls.**

sixteenth century, the great Mongol leader Baber made himself ruler of India, and set up

his court at the town of Delhi in the north-west. Here his successors lived in turn, surrounded with the greatest pomp and magnificence, and ruling over the whole vast peninsula of India. The large provinces into which the country was divided had each its viceroy, who lived in royal state, while paying allegiance to the "Great Mogul," as the chief ruler was sometimes called. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Mogul empire had reached its highest degree of power and magnificence under the Emperor Aurungzebe; but, like the empire of Rome and that of Charlemagne, it was destined to fall to pieces.

Long before the time of Aurungzebe, European settlements had been formed on the coasts of India. The first Europeans to establish themselves there were the Portuguese, who, it will be remembered, during the short day of their greatness in the beginning of the sixteenth century, made many important conquests in India under their able admiral, the celebrated Albuquerque. A century later they were followed by the Dutch, who had not yet reached the end of their long struggle with Spain. Shortly after the Dutch, the English East India Company was formed in 1600; and in 1612 they received permission from the Great Mogul of the time to set up factories in various places. The Danes followed the English; and in the latter half of the seventeenth century arrived the French, who, for nearly a century, took the lead among the European settlers in India.

When Clive arrived in India in 1744, the French had almost reached the height of their power in that country. For many years back the Mogul empire had been rapidly decaying. There was still a Great Mogul at Delhi, who was the nominal ruler of all

The French.

India, but he had ceased to have any real power. One after another the rulers of the large provinces had made themselves almost independent of him; Persians and Afghans had successively invaded Northern India, and even plundered his capital, Delhi; while the Mahrattas, a powerful mountain race, had cast off all appearance of allegiance, and were pillaging and laying waste at their will.

At the head of the flourishing French settlements was an able Frenchman named Dupleix, who had already begun to see, in the break-up of the Mogul empire and the quarrels of the native princes, an opportunity for, what was afterwards accomplished by the English, the founding of a European empire in India. Even under the predecessor of Dupleix, Dumas, the French had gained the respect of the natives by refusing to deliver up to the Mahrattas the wife of a native prince who had taken refuge in the chief French settlement, Pondicherry, and by successfully defending this town against the attack of these fierce mountain warriors. In consequence of this, the Great Mogul bestowed on Dumas the title of *nawab* or *nabob*, with the command of 4,500 horse.

By the natives of India the French had thus come to be looked on as by far the most important of the European settlers. The English were regarded as mere traders—which, indeed, was what they wished to be. The ground on which their factories stood was purchased or rented, not conquered; and they were always careful to avoid disputes with their neighbours which might lead to war, though the chief towns were furnished with a fortress to be used for defence in case of an attack. The principal English settlements were Madras on the east coast in

the south of the peninsula, Calcutta in the north-east, and Bombay in the west. It was in Madras that Clive arrived in 1744, after his long journey, with empty pockets. The work which was given him to do was not such as was likely to suit a lad of his restless, adventurous spirit. The climate affected his health, which was always delicate, and his pride and shyness prevented him from making friends. He suffered terribly from home-sickness and from overpowering fits of melancholy, to which he was all his life subject. His proud, ruling spirit made him in some ways a bad servant, and we are told that he was more than once in danger of losing his situation. "I have not enjoyed one happy day," he wrote home, "since I left my native country." His troubles weighed so much upon his mind that at length he tried to put an end to his life; but the pistol, which he twice fired at his own head, failed to go off, and this impressed him with the belief that he was being reserved for something great.

Clive in
Madras.

It will be remembered that the year of Clive's arrival in Madras was that in which the second Silesian war broke out, and France and England, which had taken opposite sides in the dispute about the Austrian Succession, declared war against each other. No sooner did Dupleix hear of this declaration of war than he began to fortify the town of Pondicherry along the coast, in case of its being attacked by sea. An English squadron did indeed come with the object of attacking the French settlements on the east coast of India, but it was defeated at sea by an inferior French fleet under the able French admiral, Labourdonnais; and in 1746 Madras was captured by

War
between
England
and France,
1744.

Madras
taken by
the French,
1746.

the French, all the goods in the warehouses were claimed as prizes of war, and all the chief English inhabitants were carried off to Pondicherry as prisoners. To complete the glory of the French in the eyes of the natives, a Swiss officer in the service of the French, named Paradis, gained a brilliant victory over a large native force which had gone to the assistance of the English at Madras. The army



of Paradis, which was much smaller than that of his enemy, consisted of a small number of Europeans and a larger number of natives, who had been drilled and disciplined by the French. This victory—the first won by Europeans over natives of India for a century—taught the natives that Europeans were not to be despised as mere traders, and showed the Europeans what they might accomplish by means of drilled and disciplined native forces. To the French belongs the credit of having first employed the natives in this way; but it was not they who were destined to reap the advantages accruing from their own idea. It was a young clerk in the counting-house of the English East India Company at Madras who, by means of this idea carried into effect, was to win the empire of all India for his country! “For him, as it turned out, and not for themselves, had the French trained the Hindu sepoy to disciplined warfare. For him, and not for

themselves, did Labourdonnais fight and Dupleix plan and plot for empire."

After the taking of Madras by the French, Clive had escaped from that town, where he was a prisoner of war, to Fort St. David, another of the English settlements on the east coast. While there, he gave up the pen for the sword, and obtained a commission in the small army of the English Company under the command of Major Lawrence. One or two slight attacks on Fort St. David by the French gave the young ensign an opportunity for showing his courage and daring; and when, later, a large reinforcement arrived from England, and an attack was made on the chief French settlement of Pondicherry, he earned much credit by his gallant conduct in the trenches before that town. But Pondicherry, thanks to the skill and determination of Dupleix, did not fall into the hands of the English, who were forced to give up the siege; and shortly afterwards the war between France and England was concluded by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Madras was restored to the English, and Robert Clive returned to his desk.

Clive enters
the army,
1747.

Peace
concluded,
1749.

French and
English in
native
quarrels.

It was not long ere he once more took up his sword. Though the crowns of France and England were now at peace, the feelings of rivalry which had sprung up between the French and the English settlers in the Carnatic, as the strip of country was called in which Madras and Pondicherry are situated, induced them to take opposite sides in the quarrels of native princes; and the state of India at the time gave them plenty of opportunity. The death of the most powerful viceroy of India, the *Nizam* of the Deccan, the vast central plateau, was followed by a struggle for the title and government

between two claimants—Nazir Jung and Mozuffer Jung. The English supported the first of these claimants, the French the second. At the same time the French supported the claims of a native prince, Chunda Sahib, to the title of Nabob of the Carnatic, while the English took the side of the nabob already in possession. **Successes of the French.** Fortune favoured the side of the princes supported by the French. One success after another was gained, one fortress after another fell into their hands, along with much treasure in money and jewels. Nazir Jung was slain in battle; and on the spot where he had fallen, Dupleix set up a pillar and caused a city to be built which was to be called Dupleix-Futtehabad (the city of the victory of Dupleix). Mozuffer Jung was installed as Viceroy of the Deccan, and Chunda Sahib as Nabob of the Carnatic; while Dupleix, now the real ruler of both provinces, assumed all the state and pomp of an Eastern prince, dressing in gorgeous jewel-trimmed garments, and surrounding himself with richly-attired attendants.

One thing only was wanting to complete the triumph of the French. Mohammed Ali, the son of the late Nabob of the Carnatic, had taken refuge with the English at Trichinopoly, and it was felt that his death or capture was necessary to render Chunda Sahib secure in possession of the province for which he had fought. An army of French and natives laid siege to the town, and it seemed as if it must fall into their hands. Had it done so, the English position in India would have been entirely lost. Like the other English settlers, Clive saw this plainly; but he also saw, what they did not, how to prevent it. He was at the time in Fort St. David, and he pointed out to the governor of the town that, if an attack were

made by the English and their allies on Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, which had been left almost unprotected, it would doubtless draw away some of the besieging force from Trichinopoly, and thus save that town. Mr. Saunders, the governor, approved of the plan; and in a short time Clive was placed in command of a small force, consisting of about 200 Europeans and 300 natives. With this force he marched on Arcot, never halting for the terrible thunderstorm that burst upon them on their march, and keeping the most perfect order and discipline in his ranks. The garrison, awed by the boldness of the men who seemed to defy even the most terrible of the forces of nature, fled without striking a blow, and Clive was able to take possession of the fort, which was in a rather ruinous condition.

Capture of
Arcot.

Clive at once set about making preparations for a siege; and in a week or two, as he had foreseen, Chunda Sahib sent a large portion of the forces which were besieging Trichinopoly against Arcot. With these were over a hundred French. No one could believe it possible for the ruinous fort of Arcot to hold out for any length of time against the attack of a force so immensely superior in numbers to that of the besieged; but the young English commander had filled his followers, both natives and Europeans, with his own resolute and daring spirit, and they were all prepared to endure anything rather than yield. Such was the devotion of the native soldiers to their leader that we are told that, when provisions became scarce, they begged him to give them only the water in which the rice was boiled for their food, and to give the grain to the Europeans, who required it more than they! The siege had lasted for more than seven weeks, when

Siege of
Arcot, 1751.

at length the besiegers resolved to storm the fort, having now made a breach in the walls. Before leading the final attack, their chief had offered honourable terms to the garrison if they would surrender, and to Clive himself a large sum of money. But these offers had been indignantly refused. The attack began in the early morning of a day held sacred by the Mohammedans, on which they believe that those who fall in battle are received with special honour in the world of the blessed. They therefore rushed upon the walls with more than

The siege
raised.

usual zeal and force; but they were met by such a well-directed fire that in an hour they were driven back from every point, and forced to withdraw. That night the siege of Arcot was raised. The next day reinforcements arrived from Madras, and with these, and a thousand Mahratta horse, whom his brave defence of the fort had induced to join him, Clive marched out to attack the enemy in the open field, and gained a complete victory over a force several times larger than his own. The effect of this victory on the minds of the natives was very great. It raised so much their opinion of the English that six hundred sepoy, or native soldiers who had been drilled by the French, at once passed over to the English side.

No sooner had Clive withdrawn from the field, however, than the enemy began to lay waste the territory of the English, and he was forced again to
 Clive's
 second
 victory. march against them. A second victory, as complete as his first, proved that the French had at length met with more than their match. On the march back to Fort St. David after the battle, Clive's little army passed the new city of Dupleix-Futtehabad; and in order to give the natives a proof of how completely the French power had been overthrown, he

ordered the buildings to be razed to the ground. Major Lawrence, who for some time back had been in England, now returned, and Clive was obliged to resign the command to him; but he continued to serve under Lawrence for a year or two, until, in 1753, he was forced to return to England for the benefit of his health. But already he had taught the natives that the English knew how to fight, and that the French could be beaten; already he had gained such power over the minds of the sepoys through his reckless daring that they believed him to be possessed of magical gifts, and were ready to follow him anywhere; already he had earned for himself throughout India the title of Sabat Jung (Daring in War).

In England, the "hero of Arcot," as he was called, was received with every mark of respect. The directors of the East India Company presented him with a diamond-hilted sword, worth £500, which, however, he declined to accept unless Clive in
England. Major Lawrence also was presented with a similar gift. His first action was to pay his father's debts, and make the circumstances of his family more comfortable; but the attention and flattery he received soon had an effect upon him, and he began to live in a style of magnificence and display for which his means were not sufficient. After being disappointed of a seat in parliament in consequence of a charge of bribery, he resolved to return to India, and applied to the Company for employment. In November 1755, he landed in He returns
to India,
1755. India with the title of Governor of Fort St. David and the commission of a lieutenant-colonel in the king's army.

It was a most important time in the history of Europe. In America, disputes had begun between the

English and French colonists, which were to furnish the State of Europe at the time. excuse for an outbreak of war between the mother countries, and thus prepare the way for the great Seven Years' War, in which almost all Europe was to engage. Frederick the Great, his preparations almost complete, was looking forward to the great struggle before him, not without much anxiety. In India, the position of the English was stronger even than when Clive had left, in consequence of the recall of the able French governor, Dupleix, who had been succeeded by a very weak man, whose one desire was peace at any price.



Before Clive had been a year in India for the second time, an act of atrocious cruelty had been committed on the English settlers in Calcutta by a native prince. Calcutta, where English factories had been established since about the time of the English revolution, is situated in the fertile plain of Bengal, which is watered by the river Ganges. In

**The Black
Hole of Cal-
cutta, 1756.**

1756, the viceroy of the province was a young man of weak mind and strong passions, named Surajah Dowlah. He had received some trifling offence from the English, and resolved to take revenge upon them. In the middle of June 1756, he appeared before Calcutta with a large army. The fort and garrison were quite unfit to offer any serious resistance; and the governor and military commandant shamefully made their escape, along with the women and children, by means of the ships on the river. When the fort fell into the hands of Surajah Dowlah, the English prisoners were handed over to his guards to be confined for the night. By these one hundred and forty-six English were marched into a dungeon eighteen or twenty feet square, into which scarcely a breath of air entered through the iron-barred slits of windows. The sufferings of the unfortunate English, confined within this narrow space on a sultry summer night in the sultry climate of India, were too terrible to be described. Of the hundred and forty-six only twenty-three were taken out alive!

The news of this act of barbarous cruelty reached Madras about two months after it had taken place—in August 1756—just when Frederick the Great was preparing to begin the Seven Years' War by invading Saxony. The council at Madras resolved to send Clive to regain Calcutta, and to inflict punishment on Surajah Dowlah for his horrible act. A small squadron of the British fleet, under the command of Admiral Watson, was to support the land force by sea. The expedition sailed in October; but it encountered a monsoon at sea, and it was not till December that it reached Bengal. By the beginning of January, Calcutta was recovered from Surajah Dowlah, and the native town of Hoogly had been taken and

Clive
recovers
Calcutta.

sacked. The Indian viceroy acted with much hesitation and uncertainty: at one time he would advance against Calcutta with a large army, at another he would treat for peace with Clive; and again he would be writing to the French settlers begging them to support him against the "Daring in War." While the semblance of a treaty of peace existed between the English and Surajah Dowlah, news arrived from Europe that France and England were at war with each other; and Clive and Admiral Watson agreed to make an attack on the French settlement of Chandernagore, to prevent the possibility of a union between the forces of the French and those of the viceroy. The attack was completely successful, and Chandernagore fell into the hands of the English.

Chanderna-
gore taken.

Surajah Dowlah now feared the English more than ever; but he also hated them bitterly, and though a treaty of peace existed between him and them, he endeavoured by secret correspondence to induce the distinguished French general Bussy to come to his assistance from the Carnatic. Meantime, his cruelty had earned for him the bitter hatred of his subjects, and a conspiracy was formed to dethrone him in favour of Meer Jaffier, the commander of his army. Clive promised to support Meer Jaffier, and entered into the plot for the dethronement of Surajah Dowlah. And now it has to be confessed that the "hero of Arcot" acted in a way that was not heroic or honourable. While plotting for the dethronement of the viceroy, he was at the same time writing to him friendly letters in order to lull his suspicions; and worse than this, when one of the conspirators, Omichund, threatened to betray the plot unless a promise to pay him a large sum of money

Conspiracy
against
Surajah
Dowlah.

was entered in the treaty, Clive did not scruple to stoop to deceit, and even to forgery! He had two treaties drawn up—one (the real one) on white paper; the other, which was prepared only to dupe Omichund, on red paper. In the white treaty there was no mention of the promise to Omichund; in the red one, which was shown to him, it was mentioned. Admiral Watson, who was an honourable man, refused to sign the red paper; and Clive, knowing that Omichund's suspicions would be aroused by the absence of the admiral's name, himself wrote Watson's signature! That is the worst action of Clive's life, and has cast a dark stain on his character, though some of his biographers have sought to excuse it on the ground that, in dealing with treacherous and deceitful *natives*, it was necessary to employ deceit. He has never been accused of dishonourable conduct in his dealings with Europeans.

The two
treaties.

When all his preparations were complete, he wrote to Surajah Dowlah announcing his intention of punishing him for the wrongs which he had inflicted upon the English of Calcutta. Surajah Dowlah assembled his army, and advanced to meet him. On the 23rd June the two armies met near Plassey, and a battle was fought which decided the future of India. Clive had only some three thousand men—one thousand Europeans and two thousand sepoys—to oppose to the fifty thousand of the enemy; but his victory was complete. Surajah Dowlah fled from the field. Some time after, he fell into the hands of his former servant, Meer Jaffier, by whose orders he was put to death. In this act Clive had no part.

Battle of
Plassey,
1757.

After the battle, the conquerors advanced to Moorshedabad, the capital of the province; and there the

victorious English general installed Meer Jaffier as vice-roy in the place of Surajah Dowlah, and Omichund was informed of the trick that had been played on him. So great was the shock which the unhappy man received, when he learned that he was to have nothing, that his mind was said ever after to have been completely unhinged. As for Clive, he became rich almost in a day, for Meer Jaffier heaped presents upon him; the doors of the treasury at Moorshedabad were opened to him, and he walked between heaps of gold, silver, and jewels. Long afterwards, his sudden great wealth was made an accusation against him; yet he had only to say the word and it would have been doubled! It was not only Clive who became rich: wealth poured into Calcutta; the English were more than recompensed for their losses, and soon the settlement was more prosperous than ever it had been before.

Clive now enjoyed a position in northern India even more powerful than that of Dupleix had been in the south. He was regarded by the natives with almost superstitious awe, and his name was known and honoured for hundreds of miles around. When the news of the victory of Plassey reached England, he was appointed Governor of Bengal; and the great statesman Pitt spoke of him in parliament as a "heaven-born general," worthy of the admiration even of Frederick the Great! And Frederick had then won his brilliant battles of Rossbach and Leuthen! Before he returned to England for the second time in 1760, Clive had more than one opportunity of displaying his great strength of character, courage, tact, and military skill. When the Seven Years' War broke out, the French sent a large force to India under Count

Clive's
wealth.

His power
in Bengal.

Lally, to attack the English settlements in the Carnatic. Lally took Fort St. David, and besieged Madras. To make a diversion, Clive sent Colonel Forde into the Deccan, where he gallantly stormed and took the French settlement of Masulipatam. During the absence of Forde, with whom had been sent the greater part of the military stores and ammunition in Calcutta, and by far the best of the forces, the son of the Great Mogul invaded the territory of Meer Jaffier with a large army. Meer Jaffier, in terror, applied to Clive for assistance. Though the forces at his command numbered only some four hundred Europeans and two thousand sepoy, Clive never hesitated a moment to advance against the enormous army of the enemy; and such was the terror of his name, that when, after a march of twenty-three days, he reached the town of Patna, on the Ganges, which the enemy were besieging, the mere tidings of his approach put an end to the siege and broke up the enemy's army! In his gratitude for this deliverance, Meer Jaffier bestowed on Clive the yearly rent, amounting to £30,000, which the English paid him for the land about Calcutta.

**The French
in the
Carnatic.**

**Siege of
Patna, 1759.**

Yet soon afterwards this grateful prince was plotting with the Dutch against the very man who had placed him in power! In October 1759, seven Dutch vessels, carrying on board a force of European and Malay soldiers, arrived at the mouth of the river Hoogly, the branch of the Ganges on which Calcutta is situated. Clive felt that, were he to allow these vessels to sail up the river and unite with Meer Jaffier, the position of the English in Bengal would be in the greatest danger. On the other hand, to prevent them sailing up at a time when Holland and England

**The Dutch
in Bengal,
1759.**

were at peace was to take upon himself a terrible responsibility. Yet after some hesitation he decided to refuse a passage to the vessels. The Dutch then landed some troops, and endeavoured to force their way both by land and by water to their settlement of Chinsurah farther up the river. Both in ships and in land forces they were greatly superior to the English; but so ably did Clive make his arrangements that in a short time the ships were all captured, and the troops killed or taken prisoners almost to a man. The authorities at Chinsurah were glad to accept any terms that Clive liked to dictate to them.

The English were now the only European nation who had any power in India. True, the French were still making a struggle in the Carnatic, but it ended completely in 1761 with the surrender of Pondicherry; and gradually one by one the native princes came under the control of England, until the whole vast peninsula owned her sway. How would the Great Mogul, Aurungzebe, have smiled in mockery had he been told that, within a century of his death, his whole vast empire would be in the power of the government of a small island thousands of miles away! And it is not too much to say that this empire, with its millions of inhabitants and its endless sources of wealth, was the gift to his country of a clerk in a counting-house in Madras.

Just when Clive was preparing to return to England for the second time, the foundations of another great British colony had been laid in North America by another great English soldier of almost the same age as Clive—General Wolfe. There had been disputes for some time between the French and the English settlers in Canada,

**The British
in Canada.**

**General
Wolfe.**

which had ended in open war when the two mother countries were known to have declared war against each other. At first the French, under their able leader, the Marquis of Montcalm, had very much the best of it; but in 1759 Wolfe was sent to Canada, and under his gallant leadership the English succeeded in defeating the French in a great battle on the Heights of Abraham, and in taking the town of Quebec.



Wounded in the heat of the fight, the brave general just lived long enough to know that the victory was his. And the victory he had won meant the conquest of all Canada for England. The next year that conquest was complete, and Canada was an English colony.

And not only Clive's victories in India and Wolfe's in Canada make the year 1759 a proud one for England. It was in that year, as was mentioned in last chapter, that several English regiments covered themselves with glory at the battle of Minden. It was in that year that Admiral Hawke

Other British
victories in
1759.

defeated the French fleet which was preparing to invade our island, in the brilliant victory of Quiberon.

We must pass rapidly over the remaining years of Clive's life. In England, where he was well received and rewarded with an Irish peerage, he lived in a style of the greatest magnificence, thanks to the enormous fortune which he had brought home with him, and he was able to settle small fortunes on his parents, his sisters, and other relatives. He also settled on Major Lawrence, who was in rather poor circumstances, a yearly income of £500. He entered parliament, but took but little interest in English politics. His health was extremely bad, and he suffered, as he had done as a lad, from fits of deep melancholy and depression.

Meantime in Bengal, since the departure of the governor, affairs had got into a very bad state. The English settlers there seemed to have had their heads fairly turned by the discovery of the enormous wealth which the country contained, and the one idea of every clerk in the counting-houses, and almost of every soldier in the army, seems to have been to make himself rich as quickly as possible—not by faithful hard work, but often by means which were neither honest nor honourable. As the wages which the clerks of the Company received were low, they had permission to trade on their own account; and this permission they now made use of to enrich themselves at the expense of the Company and of the unfortunate natives, who were reduced to a state of want by the greed of the English. The example which Clive had set of accepting presents from the natives had led to very bad results. Every clerk in the employment of the Company was not only receiving rich presents from the natives,

but was actually *extorting* them from them, and this too in spite of the fact that the Company had recently forbidden the receiving of gifts from natives by its servants. When Meer Jaffier ceased to satisfy them with what he gave, the English had dethroned him and set up another nabob, Meer Cossim, in his place; and when he, after a while, ceased to content them, they deposed him, and restored Meer Jaffier. In the army, too, there were plots, conspiracies, and mutiny. When, in 1765, Clive once more set foot in Bengal, he found a state of things that made him exclaim, "Alas! how is the English name sunk."

Clive's
third stay
in India,
1765-7.

For those who wish to be able to admire the founder of the British empire in India, Clive's third visit is the most pleasant to look back upon.

His reforms.

His reasons for making it were quite disinterested; he had nothing to gain by going, and much to lose. At home he was surrounded by every comfort and luxury, and by the love and affection of his wife and family. In India, besides the fact that his weakened health now unfitted him to endure the sultry climate, he knew he must encounter on all hands enmity, hatred, and opposition if he went as a reformer. But he had been entreated to go by those who knew that he was the only man who could set things right; and he went, as he said himself, "determined to destroy those great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt." And he kept his word. During the year and a half that he stayed in Bengal, though he won no Arcots or Plasseys, he showed more wisdom in government, more courage, more unsparing energy, and more unflinching resolution than in all his life before. He had carried out a complete reform, put an end to the corrupt practices that had been carried on, placed the affairs of the Company on a good footing, and

crushed a powerful mutiny in the army. And he came home, in ruined health and somewhat out of pocket, to find that the best action of his life had created for him a number of powerful enemies. Some three years after his last return home, in 1770, when the news of a terrible famine in Bengal stirred up the feelings of the English people, and created a desire to search into the government of the country, his enemies had become powerful enough to cause an inquiry to be made in parliament with regard to his whole conduct in India.

The inquiry, which began in 1772, lasted for a considerable time. A special committee was appointed to conduct it, and Clive was accused of having "abused the power with which he was intrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public," by having accepted the money bestowed on him by Meer Jaffier. But, as he argued, at the time he received this money there was no law forbidding the acceptance of gifts from natives. The money was given by an independent prince *in return for great services done him*, and it was voluntarily given, not demanded; whereas afterwards the Company's servants had *demanded* presents without having rendered any service for them, and after the law had been passed forbidding the acceptance of gifts. Clive was practically acquitted;

for while the resolution of the House acknowledged that he had committed certain irregularities, these words were added: "That Robert, Lord Clive, did at the same time render great and meritorious services to his country." The resolution was unanimously passed; but the anxiety and strain were too much for him to bear in his shattered state. The fits of melancholy to which he had been subject all his life became more dark and more frequent,

**Inquiry in
parliament.**

Acquittal.

**Death of
Clive,
1774.**

and while suffering from one of these, he put an end to his life in 1774, at the age of forty-nine.

We cannot take it upon us to defend every action of Clive's life, such as his dealings with Omichund ; but we consider that the many great talents and great qualities which he undoubtedly possessed, as well as the great work which he accomplished, fairly entitle him to a place among our " torch-bearers."

CHAPTER XII.

GEORGE WASHINGTON—FOUNDATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

WE are now to pass from the Old World to the New, from the tropical jungles of India, that bounded the conquests of Alexander the Great, to the virgin forests and wide prairies of the land of Columbus's discovery. George Washington, the last "torch-bearer" in our present series, is the first native-born American who has appeared in these pages. He was only some seven years younger than Robert Clive, having been born in the year 1732, in that part of North America which, a century and a half before—during that age of great maritime discovery, of romantic adventure, of the glory of Spain, and of the Inquisition—Sir Walter Raleigh had named, in honour of the maiden Queen of England, Virginia. The father of our "torch-bearer," who owned a large estate, was the descendant of a John Washington who, with his brother Andrew, had settled in Virginia during the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. The Washingtons, who belonged to an old English family, were loyally devoted to the house of Stuart, and preferred to become exiles from their country rather than yield allegiance to the Protector.

The family had been settled in Virginia nearly eighty

years when George was born ; his father and his grandfather had been born there before him ; the feeling of being strangers in a strange land, which the first settlers doubtless had, must have passed away, and to the Washingtons America, and not "the old country," must have come to be home. But still Virginia was a colony of Great Britain, and still the settlers felt a warm feeling of loyalty towards the mother country. When, in 1739, war was proclaimed between England and Spain, and an English fleet was sent against the Spanish settlements in the New World, the Virginians raised a regiment and sent it to the assistance of the English. In this regiment, Lawrence Washington, George's fourteen years older half-brother, held a commission as captain ; and the sight of the gay uniform and martial bearing of the young captain helped to awaken the love of military glory in the youthful heart of his little brother, then about eight years old.

Virginians
assist
England
against
Spain.

Even at that early age George began to show the spirit of a soldier and a commander that was born in him. Like Peter the Great, he formed his schoolmates and play-fellows into a sort of regiment during play-hours, and his favourite amusements were sham fights, reviews, and parades. At that time Clive was perhaps still terrorizing the shopkeepers of Market Drayton with his band of young pirates, and Frederick the Great had just entered into possession of his kingdom, and was preparing to invade Silesia.

George
drills his
school-
mates.

Though, in his early love of fighting, George Washington seems to have resembled Clive, in other respects the two, even as boys, were wonderfully unlike each other—Clive, passionate, wilful,

His
character.

impulsive ; Washington, calm, self-controlled, methodical. Self-discipline, physical as well as moral, appears to have been the chief object of Washington even before he left school : we hear of him practising himself in all sorts of manly exercises, horsemanship included, and of the care and exactness with which any work he undertook was done. By his companions he was looked up to for his strict principles and sense of justice, and was often appealed to to settle disputes. It gives us a vivid glimpse into the character of the boy to read that, when at fourteen years of age he went on a visit to his brother Lawrence, who had married a lady of good family, he drew up for himself "Rules for behaviour in company and conversation," which still exist in his own writing !

It was during this visit to his brother that he decided to enter the English navy ; and a post as midshipman had actually been got for him, when his mother, who was now a widow, at the last moment refused to let him go. He was sent back to school for two years longer ; and at the end of this time, when only sixteen years old, he was employed by Lord Fairfax, an English nobleman who was related to Lawrence Washington's wife, to survey his estates in Virginia, which were very extensive, reaching to the Alleghany Mountains. While employed in this work, Washington learned the art of "roughing it," generally sleeping in the open air by the side of a camp fire, and contenting himself with the coarsest food. He also learned much of the character and ways of the natives, whom he frequently came across.

He was engaged in this work of surveying when, in 1748, the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle put an end to the

war of the Austrian Succession. By this peace, however, the boundaries between the French and English territories in Canada had not been carefully fixed, and disputes soon arose which led to the war mentioned in the last chapter. One disputed territory was the district to the west of the Alleghany Mountains, which is watered by the river Ohio, and is now known by that name. In this district there were as yet no white settlers, the inhabitants being only native Indians. The Virginians, with the object of forming trading settlements there, obtained from the English Government a grant of this land, and proceeded to form an "Ohio Company." The French governor of Canada, hearing of this, despatched a company of men to take possession of the country before the arrival of the English. Leaden plates, bearing inscriptions to the effect that the land belonged to the crown of France, were nailed to trees and buried in the ground. This amounted to a declaration of war on the part of the French against the English colonists, and preparations of a warlike nature began to be made. Virginia was divided into military districts, with a major over each, who had to attend to the organizing and equipment of forces in his district. George Washington was as yet only nineteen years of age; but he had already shown so much power of organizing that he was put in charge of one of the districts, and at once began an earnest study of military tactics under the instructions of a Dutchman named Van Braam, who had served in the British army. His studies were interrupted for some time by his being obliged to accompany his brother Lawrence, who was suffering from lung disease, to Barbadoes.

French and English disputes in Canada, 1748.

The "Ohio Company," 1749.

Washington has charge of a military district.

Meantime the French continued to act as if the Ohio district belonged to them, paying no heed to the remonstrances of some native chiefs, who had formed a treaty with the Virginians. The governor of Virginia resolved to send a commissioner to the French commander on the Ohio, to remonstrate with him for encroaching on British territory. George Washington, who had now returned from Barbadoes, was only about twenty-one years of age; but the experience he had gained as a

Washington's
embassy to
the French,
1753.

surveyor, his courage, self-control, and discretion, fitted him for the office. In October 1753, he set out with his instructions. The journey was a long and very rough one, such

as only a strong, healthy man accustomed to endure bodily hardship could have undertaken. It was attended, too, with danger, as some of the native tribes in the country through which the route lay were friendly to the French, and some white men's scalps (probably those of Englishmen) had been seen in their possession. Most of the native chiefs, however, still sided with the English; and Washington, before advancing to the quarters of the French commandant, held a council of these, and persuaded three of them to accompany him on his mission. Arrived at the French quarters, his great anxiety was to prevent these chiefs from being won over to the French by the flattering speeches and gifts which the French officers were likely to bestow upon them. It was a difficult mission; and in carrying it out, George Washington showed an amount of prudence, decision, and tact, and a knowledge of character, that were surprising in so young a man. In less than three months he was back in Virginia, bringing with him, besides the reply of the French commandant, for which he had been sent, an accurate and

soldier-like knowledge of the country through which he had passed, and of the places best fitted for defence.

So far from being induced to withdraw from the Ohio, however, by the remonstrances of the governor of Virginia, the French seemed to be resolved to take military possession of the country, and the Virginians were forced to make some preparations to meet the expected attack. It was soon evident that they could expect no help from the other British colonies, each of which at that time seems to have taken up a position independent of the other; and even many of the Virginians showed great indifference and coldness in the matter. Washington, who was appointed second in command of the small force of three hundred men which was being raised, found the greatest difficulty in obtaining recruits, and complained that those who did enlist were loose, idle vagabonds, often without shoes or stockings, or even coats. However, by the beginning of April 1754, he was able to set out for the Ohio with a force of one hundred and fifty recruits; and by the end of the month he had his first taste of battle in a skirmish with a detachment of the French. "I heard the bullets whistle," he writes to his brother, "and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound." He was but twenty-two when he wrote that: many years afterwards, when the whistling of bullets had become more familiar to him, he was asked if he had really ever written so. "If I did," he said quietly, "it was when I was young."

Preparations
for war,
1754.

Washington's first
command.

This first campaign did not prove very successful. Washington's small force, reduced almost to starvation by scarcity of provisions, was compelled after some months to capitulate to the French. But it was an

honourable capitulation; and though he had won no great victory, the young soldier had gained the good opinion of all by his courage and discretion. In the following year the British Government resolved to send forces to America to support their colonies against the French. General Braddock, who was appointed commander-in-chief of the colonial forces, arrived in Virginia early in the year with two regiments of soldiers, and all the usual equipments of a European campaign. George Washington was appointed one of his aides-de-camp, and accompanied him on the expedition which was intended to recover the valley of the Ohio.

General Braddock was a brave soldier, and learned in the science of warfare; but he knew nothing of the nature of the country in which his campaign was to be fought, and he was foolish enough to make his preparations without regard to that. Washington, who knew the great stretches of primeval forest that had to be traversed, the rugged mountains that had to be passed over, and the rivers that had to be crossed, was amazed at the vast amount of baggage and the great train of artillery which accompanied the expedition, and even ventured to hint his surprise to the general; but his remarks were received with the smile with which the young recruit is usually listened to by the experienced soldier.

Events showed, however, that the general would have been wiser had he taken the advice of his Virginian aide-de-camp on one occasion, at least. As the English army approached Fort Duquesne, which Braddock had determined to attack, Washington, who knew the ways in which the natives carried on war, suggested that the Virginians

Arrival of
British
forces, 1755.

General
Braddock.

The march
against
Fort
Duquesne.

and some Indian scouts should be sent on in advance to reconnoitre the ground. General Braddock was indig-



nant at the presumption of his aide-de-camp in making this suggestion. The following morning the British army advanced "as if in a review in St. James's Park," with colours flying and drums beating. They presented such a fine appearance as they moved along, their arms glittering in the

sunshine, that even Washington for a while forgot his fears in his admiration. But as they passed along a road bordered with bushes and trees, suddenly they were assailed with shots, accompanied by the wild yells of Indians. The Virginians, accustomed to Indian warfare, scattered, each man taking his stand behind a tree, and firing on the enemy from behind its shelter. Washington advised the general to adopt the same plan with his men; but he angrily rejected the advice, and kept the men drawn up in platoons on the road, where they were mowed down by the shots of the unseen enemy. A regular panic seized them, which was increased by the terrifying war-whoops of the Indians, to which they were unaccustomed. When told to fire, they replied that it was

Defeat.

useless to fire at trees and bushes, and that they would not stand to be shot down. When the general himself received a fatal shot, a confused retreat began. The British army, consisting of about three thousand fine troops, had been defeated by a mere handful of skirmishers. General Braddock died of his

**Death of
Braddock,
1756.**

wound a day or two after the disaster. It is said that before his death he apologized to Washington for having rejected his advice. He was buried at the Great Meadows, the place where Washington had capitulated to the French the year before, and Washington himself read the funeral service, as the chaplain had been wounded.

A few months later, Washington's gallant services were rewarded by his being appointed commander-in-chief of all the forces raised in Virginia, though he was not yet three and twenty years of age. His first work was carefully to drill and discipline the men under his command, and to strengthen the posts on the western frontier of Virginia by building fortresses and garrisoning them. During the next two years, while the Seven Years' War was going on, and Frederick the Great was winning his Rossbachs and his Leuthens, and Clive his Plassey, Washington had no part in any affair of great importance. In Canada, where British forces were engaged with the French, all the glory fell to the latter, who were under the command of their powerful leader, the Marquis of Montcalm. But early in 1758, Pitt, the powerful statesman who was then at the head of affairs in England, sent out strong reinforcements to America; and among the officers was one whom he had specially chosen—one who was destined to win for England the Dominion of Canada—General Wolfe. The British forces

**Washington's com-
mand in
Virginia.**

were in three divisions. One—that in which Wolfe held the post of brigadier-general—gained the first important victory which the British had yet obtained in Canada by the taking of Louis-
Louisburg
and Ticon-
deroga, 1758.
 burg, the best harbour which the French possessed in America; the second division was completely defeated by Montcalm at Ticonderoga; the third, under General Forbes, had orders to attack and, if possible, capture Fort Duquesne, where Braddock had suffered his disastrous defeat nearly three years before.

Washington, as commander-in-chief of the forces of Virginia, which were now increased to about two thousand men, was to accompany General Forbes, and looked forward with eager excitement to the prospect of retrieving the previous defeat. But the success of the British at Louisburg had left the garrison at Fort Duquesne ill supplied with provisions; and the governor, knowing it was impossible to hold out
Taking
of Fort
Duquesne,
1758.
 against the large forces of the English, retreated on the approach of the enemy, after setting fire to the fort. The following day Washington planted the British flag on the smoking ruins. Fort Duquesne had fallen without a blow. The ruins were soon built up and fortified, and, in honour of the great statesman to whose measures the British owed their successes in Canada that year, the place was named Fort Pitt. It has now grown into the large and busy American town of Pittsburg.

Washington now returned to Virginia, where he married a charming young widow with large property and two young children, to whom he faithfully acted the part of a father. He believed his
Washington
marries.
 military work was over, though by far the most important part of it was still to be done, and he

settled down to the management of his property without apparently regretting the more stirring life he had left. Meantime the war, in which he had fired the first shot in his skirmish with the French five years before, was drawing to an end. Before the first year of Washing-

Capture of Quebec, 1759. ton's married life was over, Wolfe had fallen in the hour of victory on the Heights of Abraham above Quebec, and the noble Montcalm had died rejoicing that he should not live to see the surrender of the town he had so bravely guarded. A year later, after a brave resistance on the part of the French, all Canada was forced to own the British sway.

Final conquest of Canada, 1760. Thus the war was ended ; but this conquest of Canada was to lead to another war which would call Washington out of his retirement, and set him against the people with whom he had formerly fought side by side. A French statesman foretold that the conquest of Canada would lead to the American War of Independence. The American colonies, he said, now that they no longer had their French neighbours to fear, would no longer feel the need of the protection of England. "She will call on them to contribute towards supporting the burdens they have helped to bring on her, and they will answer by striking off their dependence." And so it proved. Fifteen years after the close of the Canadian war, the English colonies in America were at open war with the mother country.

The War of Independence. There can be little doubt that in the events that led to the war the English ministry was to blame. One of the principles on which the British constitution is built—a principle as old as Magna Carta—is that of *no taxation without representation*, which means that it is unfair to tax any one

Causes of the war.

who has not a vote for a member of parliament, or who is not "represented" in parliament. The American colonies were not represented in the British parliament, and therefore it was not only unjust, but was also contrary to the British constitution, to expect them to pay taxes to Great Britain. From 1760 onwards, however, attempts were made to force the colonies to pay duty on sugar and treacle; and in 1765, Grenville, then the British prime minister, obtained the passing of an act known as the Stamp Act, enforcing on the colonies the use of paper bearing the stamp of the British Government, which was to be purchased from British agents.

**The Stamp
Act, 1765.**

This act was received with strong opposition in the colonies. On the day on which it was to come into force, church bells were tolled, shops were shut, effigies were burned, and in New York the printed act was carried through the streets in mockery. Their common opposition to the act drew together the different colonies which, at the time of the Canadian war, had been entirely separate from one another, and several of them agreed to import no British manufactures till the act should be repealed. It was found necessary to repeal the act in the following

**Its repeal,
1766.**

year; but in 1767, the British Government imposed small duties on various articles imported into the colonies. Against these taxes the colonies sent petitions to the king and addresses to the House of Commons; and when these were not regarded, they endeavoured to "starve the trade and manufactures" of Great Britain by refusing to export raw material to England and to import British manufactures. The government was now besieged with petitions from British merchants, who were almost

**New
duties.**

ruined by the loss of the large field for commerce which the American colonies afforded. Still the ministry continued to treat the colonies with somewhat of the overbearing insolence of a stern master to his slave;

Troops and in 1768, great indignation was aroused
landed in throughout the colonies by the landing of a
Boston. strong force of troops in Boston, Massachusetts, which had taken the lead in the stand against oppression.

Two years later, Lord North, who was then prime minister, revoked all the duties *except that on tea*, which he still continued in order to maintain the right of Great Britain to tax her colonies. But it was this right that the colonies denied; and they now showed their spirit by giving up the use of tea, except what was smuggled. In 1773, when some vessels laden with tea belonging to the English East India Company arrived in

Boston the harbour of Boston, a number of men, dis-
harbour, guised as Indians, went on board, broke open
1773. the chests, and threw the tea into the sea.

This action was punished by the passing of the Boston Port Act, which forbade the landing or shipping of goods in the harbour of Boston.

In the following year, the first congress of delegates from all the British colonies in America took place at

The first Philadelphia, and a declaration of their rights
congress, was drawn up, in which several acts of parlia-
1774. ment, such as the Stamp Act, the Tea Act,

etc., were denounced as contrary to these rights. Still the colonies had no thought that in acting thus they were separating themselves from the mother country. In England, the declaration of the first American congress was treated as the mere impertinent talk of disobedient children. The king's speech in parliament complained of the disobedience of the American colonies,

and declared the intention of crushing it. The great statesman, Pitt, now Lord Chatham, did indeed exert all the eloquence which he possessed in behalf of the colonies, pointing out that their resistance was necessary and that the action of the government was tyrannical. But his eloquence was unheeded by the ministry, as was also that of the orator Burke.

Chatham
against the
government.

In April 1775, just before the second meeting of



congress, the first blood was spilled. The general in command of the British troops in Boston resolved to destroy the military stores which the Americans had laid up in Concord, a small town about eighteen miles distant. The "patriots," as those colonists who were opposed to the action of the British Government now called themselves, discovered

Beginning
of the war,
1775.

his intention ; and when the advanced portion of the British troops reached the village of Lexington, they found a small body drawn up to receive them. A skirmish followed, in which the patriots were put to flight, some eight of their number being killed. The British marched on to Concord, where they succeeded in destroying some military stores, but were driven from a bridge across the river, and pursued by the patriots along the road to Boston, suffering a good deal of loss.

There was now no longer any doubt that a war must be fought in the American colonies. Not long after the battle of Lexington, the second congress of the colonies was held, an army of fifteen thousand men was voted, and Washington was appointed commander-in-chief. He had made no attempt and had shown no desire to obtain the appointment ; but when it was offered to him, he accepted it as something laid upon him by Providence, though not without a modest doubt of his own fitness. He was now a man of forty-three, and the whistling of bullets had no longer the charm which it had possessed for him two and twenty years before. He knew how serious was the undertaking before him—how unequal must be the struggle between the raw recruits of a few half-united colonies and the well-drilled forces of a powerful nation ; but he accepted the duty laid upon him, not with the hope of any personal glory, but simply because he felt it *was* his duty.

Meantime the Americans—that is, a considerable number of independent forces from the different colonies—were besieging the British troops in Boston, and preventing supplies from reaching them, when reinforcements arrived in the harbour from England. The British commander now resolved to take possession of Bunker's Hill, a height which

**Battle of
Bunker's
Hill.**

commanded Boston. The Americans, learning his intention, determined to be before him, and secretly took

possession — not of Bunker's Hill, as had been intended, but of the neighbouring height of Breed's Hill. Here the British found them posted; and it was not till after being twice repulsed that they were able to drive them



from the hill. The Americans retreated in good order and with much smaller losses than the British. Though defeated in this first regular battle of the war, they had gained more by their defeat than the enemy by their victory. Washington was on his way from Philadelphia after the congress, to take command of the army, when the news of the battle reached him. He asked some close questions about the conduct of the American volunteers under fire, and showed great satisfaction at the replies, exclaiming, "The liberties of the country are safe!"

On taking command of the forces before Boston, Washington found plenty of work in disciplining the rough, independent, and insubordinate men of which they consisted. Nor was the want of discipline among his army the only drawback he had to contend with; he was also hampered in his movements by want of military supplies, especially pow-

Washington
in command
at Boston.

der. Perhaps no general was ever placed in a more irksome and trying position than that which he occupied during the weary months of the blockade of Boston. Popular feeling began to turn against him as time passed and no important victory was won. He was supposed to have 20,000 men under his command, while in reality he had only about half that number, and many of these were disabled by sickness or helpless from want of arms, while the powder was almost exhausted. At length, early in 1776, several cannons and a quantity of ammunition arrived at the American camp. Washington at once made active preparations, seizing and fortifying Dorchester Heights, which commanded the town, and compelling the enemy to evacuate it. In March, the British troops embarked on board the fleet in Boston harbour, and Washington entered the town as victor.

A few months later, in July 1776, the celebrated Declaration of Independence was passed by congress. The united colonies of America declared themselves henceforth independent of the British crown. There was now no possibility of going back. A British fleet with forces on board was approaching New York, where Washington had now taken up his quarters with his army. In August, a part of the American army was so completely defeated on Long Island that for a while it seemed as if all spirit had forsaken the patriots. Numbers of them deserted Washington, and those that remained were dispirited and insubordinate. When, in September, the British forces disembarked at New York, eight American regiments fled before seventy British men without firing a shot! Washington was forced to retire from New York.

Now followed a series of reverses which for a time made it appear that the cause of American freedom was almost lost. Every misfortune was by the people of the country laid to the charge of the general, and a great outcry arose against him, which was secretly fostered by men who were envious of the high position he held. Never was any one in a situation which required more endurance, resolution, and self-control than that in which Washington was now placed. He was at the head of an undisciplined and spiritless army, ill provided with the necessaries of war. He was regarded with distrust by the people for whose freedom he was sacrificing his ease and comfort and happiness. He knew that many even of his officers doubted his ability as a general and the wisdom of his policy. Yet he never thought of deserting the post to which he had been called. Through defeat, and loss, and distrust, and suspicion, he held on his way, never condescending to the weakness of defending or excusing himself, and taking advantage of every opportunity which fortune offered him to strike a blow against the enemy. Before the year 1776 was over he had surprised the British at Trenton, and taken a thousand prisoners; and in January of the following year, he almost entirely recovered his losses by the successful battle of Princeton.

Washington's difficulties.

Trenton,
1776.

It is impossible here to follow in detail the long course of the war, and to describe the different battles. None of them were, in themselves, of great interest or of great importance. Many years after the war was over, the great French emperor, Napoleon Buonaparte, in the hearing of an officer who had taken part in it, spoke in a mocking tone of the "boasted battles" of the Americans. "Sire," was the

Character of the war.

reply, "it was the grandest of causes won by skirmishes of sentinels and outposts." The officer who thus spoke was the Marquis de Lafayette, who as a young man had served under Washington in America, having been drawn there, like many another high-spirited son of France, by

**State of
feeling in
France.**

enthusiasm for the cause for which the Americans were fighting—liberty. For France was drawing near the greatest event in her history—her Revolution—and already the hearts of all the ardent youth of the country were burning with zeal for liberty, fraternity, and equality. The throne which Richelieu had laboured to make so strong a century and a half before was about to fall; the grandchildren of the people who had meekly borne the burden of starvation taxes were about to take a terrible vengeance for the sufferings of their ancestors. The will of the king had long been supreme, now the will of the people was to assert itself. The heart of the French nation was filled with bitterness against almost all the existing institutions—against the tyranny of the king, the impurity of the court, the corruptness of the church; but as yet this bitterness found expression only in the biting satire and

**Voltaire and
Rousseau.**

brilliant epigrams of the great writer Voltaire, though later it could be quenched only by streams of the bluest blood of the land. Rousseau, another French writer of the time, helped to rouse the hopes and dreams of the ardent young men of his day by his pictures of ideal states where all men should enjoy freedom and equality. To young men accustomed to the writings of Voltaire and Rousseau, the American War of Independence must have seemed like an attempt to realize the most daring hopes of their hearts, and it is not to be wondered at that they were eager to join the ranks of the patriots across the Atlantic.

In the third year of the war, 1778, France did more than permit volunteers to go to America: she formed an alliance with the young republic, induced no doubt, partly at least, by learning of the capitulation of over five thousand British troops to the Americans at Saratoga. The news of the alliance with France was received in America with much rejoicing and ringing of bells, and doubtless helped to rouse the flagging spirits of the army of the patriots. In England, the effect of the alliance was an attempt on the part of the ministry to conciliate the colonies. Bills were passed repealing the tax on tea, and renouncing the right of the king to tax America, and commissioners were sent out to treat with congress. But it was too late for such measures to be of any use. The Americans had now declared themselves an independent nation, and they refused to negotiate with England until she acknowledged their independence, or withdrew her troops and fleet from the colonies.

**Alliance
with France,
1778.**

So for nearly five years longer the war continued. Spain followed France in forming an alliance with the American colonies, and later Holland went over to the same side in consequence of a dispute with England. Thus England had to carry on war, not only with her revolted colonies in America, but also with the navies of France, Spain, and Holland at sea. In the naval war she gained great glory by her victory at Cape St. Vincent under Admiral Rodney, and by her splendid defence of Gibraltar against Spain; but in America the final victory lay with the patriots. In 1781, the American war was practically ended by the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown in Virginia to a combined army of Americans and French. Negotiations for peace soon after began, and in 1782 the

**Last years
of the war.**

independence of the United States of America was formally acknowledged by George III. in his speech to parliament.

American independence acknowledged, 1782.

Thus the cause of American freedom was won at length; and it was won, not by any sudden and startling victories, but by the persistent faith and unswerving resolution of one man—George Washington.

Some years later, when the form of the future constitution of the United States was decided, the Americans showed they knew to whom they owed their freedom by electing Washington first president of the republic. The office was not an easy one to fill. It was new, and the duties of it were therefore not yet clearly understood. Then the extent of country to be governed was very large, and composed of different colonies, each with its own local government. And lastly, the war had left the country deeply in debt. Yet in spite of all these difficulties, the new republic prospered under her first president, who showed himself, by his calm judgment, his resolution and self-control, no less fitted to govern a nation than to command an army.

Washington elected president, 1789.

In the very year in which Washington became president, 1789, the first blow was struck in the French Revolution by the storming of the Bastille by the mob of Paris. Lafayette, who had returned home after the close of the American war, wrote to Washington full of glowing hopes for the future of France; but Washington, while he watched events with eager interest, was not without grave anxiety. He feared that the masses would not be satisfied with a constitutional government, such as the more moderate and thoughtful men in France desired, and that the

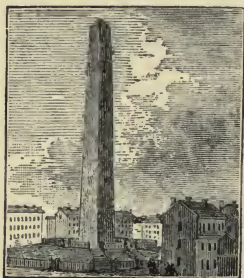
Beginning of the French Revolution.

unfortunate country from one extreme, tyranny, would be driven to the other extreme, lawlessness, violence, and riot. And he proved right. Lafayette, who had wished only for the reform of abuses, and the limitation of the power of the king by a government such as that of Great Britain, soon found himself left behind in the struggle for liberty, fraternity, and equality, and was obliged to leave his native land and to take refuge in America.

In 1798, it seemed that the new republic of the United States must be drawn into war with France, and Washington, who had now retired from the presidency, and was living peaceably at home, was once more appointed commander-in-chief of the American forces. A year later he died after a short illness. On his deathbed he showed the same calm spirit of resignation to the will of God which he had ever showed throughout his life. His time had come, and he knew it—his work was done; and already the torch of history had passed from his hands into those of a much more brilliant general, though a much less noble man — Napoleon Buonaparte. About a month before the death of Washington, in November 1799, Buonaparte had made himself first consul of France.

Washington
again com-
mander-in-
chief, 1798.

His death,
1799.



THE BUNKER'S HILL MONUMENT.

Chronological Table of the Most Important Events alluded to.



Invasion of India by Alexander the Great	B.C. 327
Beginning of Arab invasions of India	A.D. 7th century
Scandinavian invasion of Russia	9th century
Adoption of Christianity by the Russians	10th century
Foundation of Teutonic order of knights	12th century
Settlement of Teutonic knights in Prussia	13th century
Defeat of Mongols by the son of Ivan II.	1380
Union of Calmar	1397
Battle of Tannenburg	1410
Taking of Constantinople by the Turks	1453
Portuguese maritime discoveries	15th and 16th centuries
Cape of Good Hope doubled	1487
Discovery of America	1492
Charles V. Emperor of Germany	1519
Diet of Worms	1521
Conquest of Mexico	1521
First voyage round the world	1522
Freedom of Sweden restored by Gustavus Vasa	1523
Establishment of Mongol empire in India	1526
Diet of Speier	1529
Formation of League of Smalkalde	1530
Death of Luther	1546
Death of Henry VIII	1547
Death of Francis I. of France	1547
Beginning of reign of Mary I. of England	1553
Peace of Augsburg	1555
Abdication of Charles V	1556
Accession of Elizabeth to the English throne	1558
Marriage of Mary of Scotland to the dauphin	1558
Battle of St. Quentin	1559
Establishment of Reformation in Scotland	1560
Commencement of reign of Queen Mary	1561

The "Compromise"	1566
Alva comes to the Netherlands	1567
Battle of Langside	1568
Battles of Jarnac and Moncontour	1569
Commencement of Dutch independence	1572
Massacre of St. Bartholomew	1572
Drake's expedition to Nombre de Dios	1572
Relief of Leyden	1574
Henry III. becomes King of France	1574
Pacification of Ghent	1576
Frobisher's attempt to find a north-west passage	1576
Drake's expedition to the Pacific	1577
Union of Utrecht	1579
Drake returns from voyage round the world	1580
Philip of Spain King of Portugal	1580
Declaration of independence of United Provinces	1581
Murder of William of Orange	1584
Colony of Virginia founded	1584
Formation of the Catholic League	1585
War of the three Henrys	1585
Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots	1587
Battle of Coutras	1587
Defeat of the Spanish Armada	1588
Rising in Paris	1588
Assassination of Henry III. of France	1589
Drake's expedition to Portugal	1589
Battle of Ivry	1590
Henry of Navarre becomes a Catholic	1593
Death of Drake	1596
Peace of Vervins	1598
Edict of Nantes	1598
Death of Philip II. of Spain	1598
Birth of Oliver Cromwell	1599
Formation of English East India Company	1600
Death of Queen Elizabeth	1603
Assassination of Henry IV. of France	1610
Gustavus Adolphus begins his reign	1611
The English set up factories in India	1612
Treaty between Sweden and Denmark	1613
Death of Shakespeare	1616
Commencement of Thirty Years' War	1618
Battle of the White Hill	1619
Foundation of colony of New England	1620
Richelieu becomes chief minister in France	1624
Death of James I. of England	1625
Richelieu's war with the Huguenots	1625
Battle of Dessau	1626
Siege of Stralsund	1628

Siege of Rochelle.....	1628
Petition of Right.....	1628
Gustavus leads an army into Germany.....	1630
Battle of Breitenfeld.....	1631
Battle of Lützen.....	1632
Death of Gustavus Adolphus.....	1632
Richelieu takes part in the 'Thirty Years' War.....	1635
John Hampden refuses to pay ship-money.....	1637
Signing of the Scottish Covenant.....	1638
The Long Parliament begins to sit.....	1640
Independence of Portugal.....	1640
Beginning of Civil War in England.....	1642
Death of Richelieu.....	1642
Birth of Isaac Newton.....	1642
Death of Louis XIII.....	1643
Battle of Rocroy.....	1643
Battle of Marston Moor.....	1644
Battle of Naseby.....	1645
Treaty of Westphalia.....	1648
Battle of Preston.....	1648
Execution of Charles I.....	1649
Battle of Dunbar.....	1650
Battle of Worcester.....	1651
Naval war between English and Dutch.....	1652-54
Cromwell becomes Protector of England.....	1653
Jamaica taken by the English.....	1655
Massacre in Piedmont.....	1655
Death of Cromwell.....	1658
The restoration of Charles II.....	1660
Louis XIV. begins his independent reign.....	1661
The plague in England.....	1665
Great Fire in London.....	1666
Invasion of the Netherlands by Louis XIV.....	1672
Birth of Peter the Great....	1672
The Test Act passed.....	1673
Treaty of Nimwegen.....	1678
Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.....	1685
Publication of Newton's <i>Principia</i>	1687
Declaration of Indulgence.....	1688
The English Revolution.....	1688
Settlement of the English constitution.....	1689
Peter the Great begins his reign.....	1689
The Grand Alliance formed.....	1689
Battle of Killiecrankie..	1689
Battle of the Boyne.....	1690
Treaty of Limerick.....	1691
Massacre of Glencoe.....	1692
Attempted invasion of England by the French.....	1692

Death of Mary II. of England	1694
Peter the Great's expedition against the Turks	1695
Treaty of Ryswick.....	1697
Peter the Great's tour in Europe.....	1697
Foundation of kingdom of Prussia	1700
Commencement of War of Spanish Succession.....	1700
Commencement of Russian and Swedish war.....	1700
Battle of Narva.....	1700
Death of William III	1702
Founding of St. Petersburg.....	1703
Battle of Blenheim	1704
Battle of Ramillies	1706
Charles XII. of Sweden invades Russia.....	1707
Battle of Oudenarde	1708
Battle of Malplaquet	1709
Battle of Poltava.....	1709
Peter the Great's war with the Turks	1711
Birth of Frederick the Great	1712
Treaty of Utrecht.....	1713
Death of Queen Anne	1714
Death of Louis XIV.....	1715
Death of Peter the Great	1725
Birth of Clive.....	1725
Birth of George Washington.....	1732
Frederick the Great begins to reign.....	1740
Beginning of War of Austrian Succession.....	1740
Battle of Mollwitz.....	1741
Treaty of Breslau	1742
Battle of Dettingen	1743
Stuart rebellion in Scotland.....	1745
Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.....	1748
Capture and siege of Arcot.....	1751
Beginning of war in Canada	1754
Beginning of Seven Years' War.....	1756
The Black Hole of Calcutta.....	1756
Battle of Plassey.....	1757
Battles of Prague, Kolin, Rossbach, and Leuthen.....	1757
Capture of Louisburg in Canada by the British	1758
Frederick defeats the Russians at Zorndorf.....	1758
He is defeated at Hochkirch.....	1758
Capture of Quebec by General Wolfe.....	1759
Battle of Minden.....	1759
Clive defeats the Dutch in Bengal.....	1759
Final conquest of Canada by the British.....	1760
Frederick's victories at Liegnitz and Torgau	1760
End of the Seven Years' War	1763
Clive's reforms in India	1765-67
American Stamp Act passed.....	1765

American Stamp Act repealed.....	1766
First partition of Poland.....	1772
Tea emptied into Boston harbour.....	1773
First American congress.....	1774
Death of Clive	1774
Beginning of American War of Independence	1775
Declaration of independence of United States	1776
Alliance between France and United States.....	1778
American independence acknowledged.....	1782
Washington elected first president.....	1789
Beginning of French Revolution	1789
Buonaparte becomes first consul.....	1799
Death of Washington.....	1799

INDEX.

- "Accord," the, 18.
 Aix-la-Chapelle, treaty of, 209.
 Albert of Brandenburg, 199.
 Albuquerque, Portuguese admiral, 10.
 Alexis, Tsar of Russia, 182.
 Alexis, son of Peter the Great, 195, 196.
 Alliance, the Triple, 145, 157.
 Alliance, the Grand, 171.
 Alsace taken by France, 103.
 Alva, Duke of, 20, 83.
 Anjou, Duke of, 31, 62.
 Anjou, Philip of, 175.
 Ann of Austria, 95.
 Anne, Princess of Denmark, 164.
 Anne, daughter of James II., 164; acknowledged queen, 192.
Annus Mirabilis, 146.
 Arcot, siege of, 231.
 Argyle, Marquis of, hanged, 146.
 Argyle, Earl of, executed, 148.
 Armada, the Spanish, 48, 52.
 Army, the New Model, 122, 123.
 Augsburg, treaty of, 12, 78.
 Azov, taking of, 185.
 Babington Plot, the, 48.
 Balboa, 10.
 Barebone's Parliament, 132.
 Bastille, storming of the, 266.
 Bavaria, Elector of, 206.
 Bengal, 238; Dutch in, 239; famine in, 244.
 Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, 93, 94.
 Berwick, Pacification of, 113.
 Bismarck, Prince, 219.
 Blake, Admiral, 133.
 Blenheim, battle of, 193.
 Boston, 258; evacuated, 262.
 Boyne, battle of the, 163.
 Braddock, General, 252-254.
 Bradshaw, John, 142.
 Brandenburg, Elector of, 88.
 Brandenburg, house of, 198; Albert of, 199.
 Breitenfeld, battle of, 88.
 Butler, Colonel, 94.
 Breslau, treaty of, 206.
 Brille, taking of, 24.
 Buckingham, Duke of, 106.
 Bunker's Hill, battle of, 260.
 Buonaparte, Napoleon, 267.
 Burleigh, Lord, 44.
 Cadiz, 49.
 Calcutta, the Black Hole of, 234, 235.
 Calmar, Union of, 74.
 Calvin, John, 12.
 Canada, 240, 241; conquest of, 256.
 Carnatic, the, 229; the French in, 239.
 Câteau Cambresis, Peace of, 15.
 Catherine I. of Russia, 194.
 Catherine II. of Russia, 216.
 Catherine de Medici, 23, 25, 65, 66.
 Cervantes, 102.
 Chancellor, Richard, 181.
 Chandernagore, 236.
 Charlemagne, 105.
 Charles I. of England, 83; marriage of, 97; reign of, 106-127.
 Charles II. of England, 129; death of, 144.
 Charles I. of Spain, 11.
 Charles Albert of Bavaria, 206.
 Charles Edward, Young Pretender, 208, 209.
 Charles V. of Germany, 11-15.
 Charles VI. of Austria, 204.
 Charles IX. of France, 23.
 Charles XII. of Sweden, 189.
 Chatham, Lord, 259.
 Christian IV. of Denmark, 83, 107.
 Christina of Sweden, 86, 92.
 Chunda Sahib, 230.
 Civil War, the English, 115.
 Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, 147, 167.
 Claypole, Lady, 135.
 Clement, Jacques, 67.

- Clive, Robert, 221-245.
 Coligny, Admiral, 22-25, 57, 58.
 Columbus, 9, 10.
 Commonwealth, the English, 133.
 Concord, 260.
 Condé, Prince of, 104.
 Copernicus, 150.
 Corneille, Pierre, 103.
 Cortez, Hernando, 10, 40.
 Cornwallis, Lord, 265.
 Covenant, the, 112.
 Cromwell, Henry, 139.
 Cromwell, Richard, 139.
 Cromwell, Oliver, 106-135.
 Culloden, battle of, 209.
 Cumberland, Duke of, 212.
 Czar, first adoption of title, 180.
- Dalrymple, Sir John**, 169.
 Denmark, Swedish war with, 76.
 De Ruyter, Admiral, 134.
 Descartes, René, 103.
 Dessau, battle of, 84.
 Dettingen, battle of, 207.
 Devereux, 94.
 Doughty, Thomas, 44.
 Dover, treaty of, 145, 157.
 Drake, Sir Francis, 35-54.
 Dresden, treaty of, 208.
 Drogheda, storming of, 123.
 Drumclog, battle of, 147.
 Dryden, John, 146.
 Dunbar, battle of, 130.
 Dupleix, Joseph, 226; rise of, 230; re-
 called, 234.
- Edgehill, battle of**, 119.
 Eger, fortress of, 94.
 Egmont, Count of, 15, 19; death of, 20.
 Elizabeth, Queen, 29, 30, 33-54, 63, 73.
 Elizabeth of Nassau, 105.
 Elizabeth of Russia, 209.
 England, New, founded, 110.
 Episcopalianism, 109; in Scotland, 112.
 Eric XIV. of Sweden, 76.
 Essex, Earl of, 73.
- Fairfax, General**, 124.
 Farnese, Alexander. See "Parma."
 Ferdinand of Bohemia, 80.
 Ferdinand of Styria, 79.
 Fleetwood, Charles, 139.
 Forbes, General, 255.
 France, in seventeenth century, 155; alli-
 ance with America, 265.
 Francis I. of France, 11, 12.
 Francis I., Emperor of Germany, 203.
 Frederick the Great, 197-220.
- Frederick-William I. of Prussia, 200.
 Frederick-William, the "Great Elector,"
 199.
 French literature, Golden Age of, 102.
 Frobisher, Sir Martin, 43.
Fronde, the, 126.
 Fürstenbund, 219.
- Galileo**, 150.
 George I. of England, 201, 221.
 George II. of England, 222.
 George, Prince of Denmark, 164.
 Gerard, Balthazar, 32.
 Ghent, Pacification of, 29.
 Glencoe, massacre of, 169.
 Gordon, Scottish officer, 94.
 Gordon, Patrick, 183-188.
 Graham, John, of Claverhouse, 147, 167.
 Grand Alliance, the, 171.
 Granvella, Spanish cardinal, 16.
 Grenville, George, 257.
Gueux, Les, 17.
 Guise, Duke of, 13, 25.
 Gustavus Adolphus, 74-91.
 Gustavus Vasa, 75, 76.
- Hamilton, Duke of**, 123.
 Hampden, John, 111, 118-120.
 Hawke, Admiral, 241.
 Hawkins's expedition, 36.
 Heights of Abraham, battle of the, 255.
 Henrietta Maria, Princess, 97.
 Henry III. of France, 61.
 Henry VIII. of England, 11, 12.
 Henry of Guise, 63-66.
 Henry of Nassau, 22.
 Henry of Navarre, 55-73.
 Hochkirch, battle of, 215.
 Hoogly, the, 235.
 Horn, Swedish general, 94.
 Hubertsburg, Peace of, 216.
 Huguenots, persecution of, 174.
 Hungary, King of, 94.
 Hurst Castle, 125.
- Independence, American War of, 256
 ended, 265.
 Independence, Declaration of, 262.
 India, early history of, 223-225; Clive in,
 223; successes of French in, 230; British
 supreme in, 240.
 Indulgence, Declaration of, 163.
 Ingria taken by Russia, 192.
 Ireland, 117, 118; Cromwell in, 123;
 James II. in, 167; William III. in, 168.
 Ireton, Henry, 142.
 Irish brigade in France, 169.
 Ironsides, Cromwell's, 119.

- Ivan II. of Russia, 180.
 Ivan III. of Russia, 180.
 Ivan IV. of Russia, 181.
 Ivory, battle of, 68.

Jacobites, the, 169.
 Jamaica, capture of, 134.
 James I. of England, 30, 80-83, 109.
 James II. of England, 144-148.
 James, son of James II. of England, 176.
 Jarnac, battle of, 22, 57.
 Jeffreys, Judge, 150.
 John, Don, of Austria, 29, 42, 83.
 Joseph, Emperor of Germany, 219.
 Joyce, Cornet, 123.
 Joyeuse, Duke de, 63.

Katte, Lieutenant, 203.
 Kepler, Johann, 150.
 Khan, Gengis, 179.
 Killiecrankie, battle of, 167.
 Knox, John, 13, 16.
 Kolin, defeat of Prussia at, 212.
 Kronstadt, fortification of, 191.
 Kunersdorf, battle of, 215.

Labourdonnais, Bertrand de, 227.
 Lafayette, Marquis de, 264-266.
 La Hogue, battle of, 173.
 Lally, Count, 239.
 Lambert, Major-General, 140.
 Langside, battle of, 30.
 Laud, Archbishop, 112-114.
 Laurence, Major, 229-233.
 League, the Catholic, 79.
 League, the, 62; war with, 68.
 Lech, passage of the, 90.
 Lefort, François Jacob, 183-188.
 Leicester, Earl of, 47.
 Leslie, Alexander, 85, 113; Earl of Leven, 120.
 Leslie, David, 129.
 Leslie, Scottish officer in Germany, 94.
 Leuthen, battle of, 214.
 Lexington, battle of, 260.
 Leyden, relief of, 27, 28.
 Liegnitz, battle of, 216.
 Limerick, treaty of, 169.
 Lithuania, 180.
 London, great fire of, 147.
 Londonderry, siege of, 167.
 Louis, Count, of Nassau, 21-24.
 Louis XIII. of France, 95.
 Louis XIV. of France, 145, 155; ambition of, 162; Irish brigade of, 169; death, 201.
 Louisburg taken, 255.
 Loyola, Ignatius, 78.

 Luther, Martin, 12.
 Lutter, battle of, 84.
 Lützen, battle of, 90.
 Luynes, favourite of Louis XIII., 96.

Macdonald, Flora, 209.
 Macdonalds of Glencoe, 170.
 Madras, Clive in, 227.
 Magdeburg, 84; sack of, 88.
 Magellan, Fernando de, 11.
 Mansfeld, Count, 80, 84.
 Mantua, siege of, 99.
 Marck, William de la, 24.
 Margaret of Navarre, 55.
 Margaret of Parma, 18.
 Margaret of Valois, 58.
 Maria Theresa, 204-209.
 Marlborough, Duke of, 164, 173, 193.
 Marston Moor, battle of, 120.
 Mary of Guise, 13.
 Mary of Medici, 95, 96.
 Mary Stuart, 13, 29, 33; execution of, 49.
 Mary II. of England, marriage of, 161; death of, 173.
 Massacre of St. Bartholomew, 25.
 Maurice of Nassau, 81, 105.
 Maximilian of Bavaria, 82.
 Mayenne, Duke of, 66-72.
Mayflower, the, 110.
 Mazarin, Cardinal, 104.
 Mazeppa, Ivan Stefanovitch, 193.
 Meer Jaffier, 236.
 Mendosa, Spanish ambassador, 70.
 Menzikoff, Alexander, 192.
 Menzikoff, Princess, 194.
 Mexico, conquest of, 10.
 Milton, John, 134.
 Minden, battle of, 215.
 Mogul, the Great, 225.
 Mohammed Ali, 230.
 Molière, Jean Baptiste, 103.
 Mollwitz, battle of, 205.
 Moncontour, battle of, 57.
 Monk, General, 140.
 Monmouth, Duke of, 148.
 Mons taken, 24; retaken, 26.
 Montauban, 59.
 Montcalm, Marquis of, 254.
 Montmorenci, Duke of, 100.

Namur, capture of, 174.
 Nantes, Edict of, 72; revoked, 174.
 Narva, battle of, 189; taking of, 192.
 Naseby, battle of, 121.
 Netherlands, war in the Austrian, 207.
 Nevers, Duke of, 99.
 Newark, Charles I. at, 121.
 New England founded, 110.

- New Model army, the, 122, 123.
 Newport, Charles I. at, 125.
 Newton, Sir Isaac, 136-154.
 Nimwegen, treaty of, 160.
 Nismes, 59.
 Nizam, Viceroy of India, 229.
 Nombre de Dios, 38.
 Nördlingen, battle of, 94.
 Norris, Sir John, 53.
 North, Lord, 258.
 Noteburg, capture of, 191.
 Nottingham, Charles I. at, 115.

 Ohio Company, the, 249.
 Omichund, 236, 237.
 Orange, Prince of, 15-32.
 Oxenstiern, Chancellor of Sweden, 77, 92.

 Palatine, Elector, 80.
 Paradis, Swiss officer, 223.
 Paris, 69, 72.
 Parliament, Barebone's, 132; the Convention, 165; the Long, 113-131, 139-141.
 Parma, Margaret of, 18.
 Parma, Prince of, 30, 70, 83.
 Partition Treaty, the, 175.
 Pascal, Blaise, 103.
 Patna, siege of, 239.
 Perry, Captain, 187.
 Peter the Great, 178-196.
 Peter III. of Russia, 216.
 Petition of Right, the, 107.
 Philip II. of Spain, 12-16, 31.
 Piccolomini, Ottavio, 94.
 Piedmont, massacre in, 134.
 Pilsen, Wallenstein at, 93.
 Pittsburg, 255.
 Plague, the, 142.
 Plassy, battle of, 237.
 Poitiers, treaty of, 62.
 Poland, Partition of, 217.
 Poltava, battle of, 193.
 Pomerania, 86, 88.
 Pompadour, Madame de, 210.
 Pondicherry, 227-229.
 Portugal, independence of, 104.
 Potsdam Guards, 200, 201.
 Pragmatic Sanction, the, 204.
 Prague, battle of, 211; treaty of, 95.
 Preobrazinski Guards, the, 184.
 Presbyterianism, 112; in Scotland, 146.
 Preston, battle of, 124.
 Pride, Colonel, 125.
Principia, Newton's, 144, 150.
 Protector, Cromwell made, 133.
 Prussia, rise of, 197-220.
 Puritanism, 109.
 Pym, John, 118.

 Quebec, capture of, 256.

 Racine, Jean, 103.
 Raleigh, Sir Walter, 46.
 Ramillies, battle of, 193.
 Reformation in Scotland, the, 13.
 Remonstrance, the Grand, 117.
 Requesens, governor of the Netherlands, 28.
 Restoration, the, in England, 141.
 Revolution, the French, 266.
 Richelieu, Cardinal, 85, 95-105.
 Ridolfi Plot, the, 34.
 Right, Declaration of, the, 166.
 Rochelle, 57, 59; siege of, 99.
 Rocroy, battle of, 104.
 Rodney, Admiral, 265.
 Rossbach, battle of, 213.
 Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 264.
 Rump, the, 131.
 Rupert, Prince, 120.
 Russia, state of, 178; adoption of Christianity in, 179; in sixteenth century, 180.
 Ruyter, De, Admiral, 134.
 Ryswick, treaty of, 175.

 Saardam, 186.
 St. Bartholomew, massacre of, 25.
 St. Petersburg, founding of, 191.
 Sancerre, 59.
 Saratoga, capitulation of, 265.
 Sarsfield, Patrick, 169.
 Savoy, Duke of, 134.
 Savoy, Prince Eugene of, 193.
 Saxony, Elector of, 88.
 Schiller, Johann von, 94.
 Sedgemoor, battle of, 148.
 Seven Years' War, the, 210; ended, 216.
 Ship-money, 111.
 Sidney, Sir Philip, 47.
 Sigismund, King of Poland, 76.
 Silesian War, the, 204; second, 207-214.
 Smalkaldic League, the, 12.
 Sophia, Princess, of Russia, 182-184.
 Soubise, General, 213.
 Spain, English war with, 222.
 "Spanish Fury," the, 28.
 Spanish Succession, War of the, 176, 192.
 Speier, Diet of, 12.
 Spenser's *Faery Queen*, 53.
 Stamp Act, the, 257.
 Stockholm, Diet of, 86.
 Strafford, Earl of, 114, 115.
 Streltsi, revolt of the, 182-188.
 Sully, Duc de, 71, 72, 96.
 Surajah Dowlah, 235-237.
 Sweden, Russian war with, 189; fall of, 194.

Tannenburg, battle of, 198.
 Test Act, the, 149.
 Thirty Years' War, the, 78, 96.
 Ticonderoga, battle of, 255.
 Tilly, General, 81-90.
 Torgau, battle of, 216.
 Trenton, battle of, 263.
 Trichinopoly, siege of, 230.
 Triple Alliance, the, 145, 157.
 Tromp, Van, Admiral, 134.
 Tsar, adoption of title, 180.
 Turenne, General, 105.
 Turkey, Russian war with, 194.
 Tuscany, Grand Duke of, 206.
 Ukraine, the, 193.
 Uniformity, Act of, 145.
 Union, the Protestant, 79.
 United States, the, 110, 262-267.
 Utrecht, Union of, 31.
 Valois, Margaret of, 53.
 Valteline, the, 97.

Vega, Lope de, 102.
 Vervins, treaty of, 72.
 Virginia founded, 47, 247; Washington in,
 Vladimir of Russia, 179. [254.
 Voltaire, François, 203, 264.
 Walker, George, 167, 168.
 Wallenstein, Imperial general, 83, 94.
 Walpole, Robert, 222.
 Washington, George, 246-267.
 Washington, John, 246.
 Washington, Laurence, 247.
 Westphalia, treaty of, 105, 157.
 Wexford, storming of, 128.
 William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, 15-32.
 William III. of England, 155-177; pro-
 claimed, 165.
 Winthrop, John, 110.
 Witt, Cornelius de, 159.
 Witt, John de, 158, 159.
 Wolfe, General, 240-256.
 Zorndorf, battle of, 214.



YB 24931

